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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18TH, 2014

Everyone here at The GEM wishes all our readers and advertisers a very peaceful Christmas and every good fortune in the New Year. We are now taking a festive break and will not be publishing next week, but we will be back again on Thursday, January 1.

Pupils rally to Shoebox appeal

ABOVE:
Loading the shoeboxes filled with gifts for the needy.

PENDOYLAN Primary School again had "an overwhelming response" to the Christmas 'Shoebox appeal' and is sending 104 shoeboxes to disadvantaged children across Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, courtesy of the Christian charity 'Samaritan's Purse'.

In the photo above, two year-6 pupils help to load up the van before the shoeboxes start their marathon journey.

"A big, Christmassy thank you to everyone who sent in a box and if you'd like to find out more about, or support, the appeal, please check out the website *shoeboxworld.co.uk*," a spokesman said.

REINDEER PARADE IS SEEKING SPONSORS

The Cowbridge Reindeer Parade, which celebrated its most successful event ever this year, is appealing for sponsors to give next year's festive bonanza a boost.

Organisers said they were "thrilled" with the turnout of spectators – and grateful to organisations who made this year's parade possible.

Huge crowds thronged the streets anxious for a glipse of Father Christmas, the reindeer and the accompanying procession.

Alun John, the chairman of the Cowbridge Chamber of Trade, said: "On behalf of the chamber of trade, we would like to thank all the organisations and individuals for their time and help in organising and, in some cases, participating in this year's parade.

"It was, without doubt, the most successful ever.

"It is difficult to estimate how many people attended because it is a free event and there are no tickets. There could have been as many as 30,000 people.

"It is a charity event and what is collected goes to Cowbridge and Llantwit Major Lions.

"We put the reindeer parade on each year as a thank you to all the people who come into the town."

PETA, an organisation concerned with the welfare of animals, had raised the issue of whether reindeer should be used at the parade.

The reindeer come from the Cairngorms in Scotland. Alun said he had visited the reindeer centre, had looked into the matter and was content that they are well cared for.

He added: "We are now keen for sponsors to contact us in relation to next year's event."

Cowbridge Chamber of Trade would like to thank the following for their support of the parade: The ATC; South Wales Police; the Vale Council; the Mayor and Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council; Churches Together; The Vale of Glamorgan Farmers' Market; Cowbridge and Llantwit Lions Club; the RAF St Athan Volunteer Band; St John Ambulance; Penllyne Estate Farm; Cowbridge Comprehensive School, the town crier; CAVRA; the Newfoundland dogs; Aubrey and the stage performers; Lucy and Rhodri Owen; Ruth and Jonathan Wignall; the elves and helpers; Waitrose; Beagles Country Store; and, of course, Santa and the reindeer.

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Readers' Letters

Please keep your letters BRIEF and address them to: The Editor, at Glamorgan GEM Ltd, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7EL or email gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk

LETTERS AND E-MAILS MUST INCLUDE FULL ADDRESS AND A CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER

IMPORTANT: We reserve the right to edit all letters. We do NOT accept anonymous mail. An email address alone is not sufficient! We will (*in certain circumstances*) protect a writer's identity, if requested.

State funding issues affecting Vale pupils

I'M writing in the hope of making local parents aware of the terrible state of funding for Vale pupils.

In my current role as governor for a Vale primary school, I was shocked and angered at the harsh facts that Vale schools sit 17th out of 22 local authorities in Wales, in terms of the average spent per pupil.

On top of that, which I feel is the main problem, average spend in England is £700 more per pupil.

This means Vale schools falls almost £1,400 short of the average spend per pupil in England.

How can Westminster and the Welsh Assembly justify this?

From an equal opportunities point of view, this is nothing more than discrimination.

If this was a gender or race issue, it would not be allowed to happen.

With rising class sizes, increasing special needs for children and a shortage of LSAs due to funding, reading my school report is deeply concerning and making the books add up is a near impossible task.

I will be forwarding my concerns in a letter to Alun Cairns MP, in the hope of raising some awareness ahead of next year's election.

I hope your readers will do the same on behalf of their children.

D Kearse,

Recycling and waste online

WITH reference to an item in The GEM recently, at last some council department have used their brains and come up with a good money-saving idea worth approximately £24,000.

Printed Recycling and Waste calenders will now be obtained online, and black and white printouts obtained by phone for those who are not online.

To save further costs of postage, print versions could be placed in libraries, post offices and council offices.

Has anyone else got a feasible money saving suggestion to stop further welfare cuts?

(***Name and address supplied***)

GIVE TIME TO MARIE CURIE

I AM appealing to GEM readers to volunteer for Marie Curie's Great Daffodil Appeal, and help people living with a terminal illness get the care they need.

We're looking for people who can donate a couple of hours of their time to collect for Marie Curie this February and March. All they need to do is encourage people to give a donation in return for a daffodil pin.

Collecting for the Great Daffodil Appeal will help Marie Curie Nurses care for someone in the local Cardiff and Vale hospice at Penarth, so they can spend more time with the people they love.

If you're able to donate your time to help, please contact me on 02920 426068; email Helen.mulhern@mariecurie.org.uk or visit www.mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil.

Helen Mulhern
(Community Fundraiser)

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TRANSPORT GROUP THANKS HELPERS

IT'S been a busy year for the East Vale Community Transport (EVCT) providing transport for a number of organisations in Penarth, Cogan, Llandough and Sully.

Approximately 250 trips have been provided this year taking some 3,528 members on a range of excursions, including locally the Pier and Cosmeston, further afield to Weston Super Mare, Cwmbran, Bath, Newtown and mid Wales, shopping trips to supermarkets – and at this time of year our special seasonal trips to see the Christmas lights.

We wish to thank everyone who came out to support us at this year's Penarth Christmas Festival – when Santa Claus came to town.

Details can be found on our new web-site *www.evct.org.uk*.

Our office will be closed from December 18 to January 5. We wish to extend seasonal greetings to all our members and those who help provide our services, and look forward to a busy 2015.

Ken Pile
(*EVCT Trustee*).

Scout Post excels itself!

THIS year, Scout Christmas Post in Cowbridge has been more successful than ever.

Last year, 12,800 stamps were sold; this year, over 16,600 – an increase of 30 per cent. By now most of these will have been delivered and any remaining will be delivered this weekend.

The sorting and delivering has involved over 60 families, without whose help Scout Post could not operate. A huge 'thank you' to each and every one.

The sale of stamps also involves a lot of extra work for the staff in our outlets: Davies', Charity Card shop, Barnes, Arthur John, and the library; and we are very grateful to them all.

No matter how hard we try, we still get cards for addresses outside of our delivery areas, and these will be kept in the Scout Hall.

They can be collected from me if you call 01446 773263. There are also several with only Christian names and no addresses.

I am sure the huge increase in sale of stamps is partly due to the front page article in The GEM in November.

A thank you, also, to all of you who use the Scout Post. The funds it generates for Cowbridge Scout Group, 20p for each stamp sold, contributes enormously to the cost of running the whole troop.

David Weber,
Cowbridge.

The plight of Christians in the Middle East

I HOPE that at Christmas we will find time to think about the plight of Christians and other minorities in the Bible lands, particularly Syria and Iraq, where they face annihilation, due to the activities of ISIS and other extremists.

According to a recent report in the Independent newspaper, the Iraqi government and the Kurdistan regional government have failed in their pledge to defend the Christians and other minorities against the extremists.

The number of Christians in Iraq has declined from over one million in 2003 to about 250,000 today.

Iraqi Christians have been frequent victims of murder, kidnapping and robbery.

They have had their homes, farms, shops, and vehicles taken from them, and sometimes their children stolen.

The Christians and other minorities are in need of such basic items as food, blankets, and hygiene items, particularly now the Iraqi winter has set in.

May I urge your readers to be generous to those charities which are bringing aid to beleaguered minorities in the Middle East?

Rev Robert Parrish,
Rector of Merthyr Dyfan, Barry.

Tenovus' thank you

AS 2014 draws to a close I'd like to take some time to thank all 1,900 volunteers who generously give so much time to Tenovus Cancer Care across Wales.

Tenovus Cancer Care supports cancer patients and their loved ones by offering emotional support and practical advice. The hard work and dedication of our volunteers means that we're able to continue our vital work in the community and help more people affected by cancer.

We're really very grateful to them, and we're looking forward to a fantastic 2015!

Claudia McVie,
Cardiff.
(Chief Executive, Tenovus Cancer Care)

GUIDE DOGS' GRATITUDE

ON behalf of Guide Dogs for the Blind, I would like to thank the people of Cowbridge for their generosity in raising £426 at the street collection held on November 15.

The money raised will go towards training guide dogs for visually impaired people in Wales, and give them the independence to go about their lives as normally as possible.

John Chard, Penarth.

IN PRAISE OF WELSH NHS

I AM in agreement with Colin James, Barry, (The GEM, December 11); it is about time media, politicians and BBC presenters think about all the operations and treatments the NHS carry out every day – mostly sucessfully – and the occasions our ambulance service are criticised for delays that they are unable to do anything about.

I have been very lucky to have had the Welsh NHS care for me. I am now 84 years old: in 1983, I had a brain bleed and in 1999 and 2002, I had both hips replaced. Then, four years ago, I had a stroke. The first responders, Wendy from Penmark and her driver, attended me for an hour, while the ambulance they called took an hour to come as it was held up at Heath Hospital.

They then took me to Llandough, where I could not have had better treatment and quality service.

So please, think of the effort our loyal Welsh NHS people carry out every day.

Let's have more praise and less complaining!

Yes, mistakes are made, but we are all only human beings.

D G Harris,
Rhoose.

Waiting game for hospital ops

I REFER to previous correspondence regarding NHS waiting times for hip and knee operations which Mark Drakeford AM stated to be 15 weeks.

In a letter from the Minister's office, they attempted to justify his remarks by saying this was the median time.

If this was the case, it would mean that some would be higher and some lower.

There are no hospitals in Wales where the waiting times are anywhere near this time.

In a recent conversation with the management of the Princess of Wales Hospital, I was informed that all elective surgery at the hospital, including hips and knees, has been cancelled indefinitely, with no idea of a date when these would recommence.

As far as the Health Minister is concerned, there are only two possibilities regarding his statement:

Either he deliberately misled the Welsh people or he does not know what is happening in the hospitals under his care.

To allow a major hospital to collapse to the point where they cannot provide the care the people of Wales deserve, is unforgiveable.

MT Hopkins,
Cowbridge.

HIGH TIDE TIMES
(UNTIL DECEMBER 25)

The high tides listed in this week's GEM are those in Porthcawl. It should be remembered that along the coast, high tide times will vary. For instance, in Barry, the high point will be 20 – 25 minutes later.

DATE	Time AM	Ht M	Time PM	Ht M
18 Thur	03.05	8.0	15.28	8.2
19 Fri	03.59	8.4	16.21	8.6
20 Sat	04.48	8.9	17.08	9.1
21 Sun	05.33	9.4	17.52	9.5
22 Mon	06.16	9.8	18.38	9.9
23 Tues	07.01	10.2	19.23	10.0
24 Wed	07.47	10.3	20.08	10.0
25 Thur	08.32	10.2	20.55	9.8

While The GEM makes every effort to check the accuracy of tide tables, we recommend that anyone putting out to sea, or walking in an area where they could be cut off, should check with a tide table specific to their location.

We abide by the code of practice upheld by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO). This contains provisions for issues such as accuracy.

If you have a complaint, write to us at the address below, left, or call editorial manager Don John on 01446 774484. All complaints will be fully investigated. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you may wish to contact IPSO c/o Halton House, 20-23 High Holborn, London EC1N 2JD. Website: www.ipso.co.uk. Tel: 0300 123 2220. E-Mail: complaints@ipso.co.uk. Enquiries: inquiries@ipso.co.uk.

Coun Elmore at Llanfair Primary School.

Llanfair Primary's early Christmas present at the fair!

PUPILS, governors, parents and staff at Llanfair Primary School received an early Christmas present at their Christmas fair when they heard the news that the school will be receiving £500,000 investment to improve its buildings.

Coun Chris Elmore, cabinet member for children's services, visited the school to unveil the plans for the improvements and was given a festive welcome.

Following the presentation of the plans Coun Elmore said: "Thanks to this investment Llanfair Primary School will now have buildings of the highest standard.

"The Vale Council has increased spending over the last two and half years on school buildings and is committed to improving the learning environments in which our children and staff learn and work. I am delighted to be able to present plans for another upgrade for a Vale school."

The funding will be used to create a new combined foundation phase unit, replacing demountable buildings as well as provide a new roof for the main building. Work is due to start in January 2015 and should be completed by the end of March 2015.

'Old boy' Jordan gives students some West End insights

WEST END performer and past pupil of Cowbridge Comprehensive School, Jordan Lee Davies, has taken time out of his busy schedule to give the school's performing arts pupils a guided back stage tour.

After achieving excellent results in drama and music at Cowbridge Comprehensive School, Jordan graduated from the Guildford School of Acting in 2011.

Since then he has been busy with acting jobs and performing in musicals around Europe. His television credits include appearing on The Voice UK, where he was a part of Team Will.

Last year, he appeared as Peter Pan at The Grand Theatre, Blackpool.

Jordan is appearing in *Les Miserables* at The Queens Theatre, London. Seen by more than 70 million people in 43 countries and in 22 languages around the globe, it is still breaking box-office records everywhere in its 30th year. He took time to show the performing arts students around the theatre and they were able to ask questions and receive valuable information about a career in the industry.

Pupils were given an amazing insight into the performance support aspect of a career in the theatre.

They were able to see a variety of different professionals at work, including make-up artists, wig and hair design artists, as well as lighting and sound designers.

They were also able to experience working on a revolving stage and talk to several performers about their roles in the musical.

AC

Dream of a performance by Peterston-Super-Ely Primary School pupils!

THERE was magic in the air when year-5 pupils from Peterston-Super-Ely Primary took to the stage at the Sherman Theatre, Cardif, to perform a Midsummer Night's Dream, as part of the school's Shakespeare Festival.

"The hard work the children and staff put into the performance really paid off," said Mrs Lloyd, the headteacher.

"They put on a spectacular show, and we were all so proud of them."

COMMUNITY NEWS

Your local correspondent is
NANCY DAVIDGE
"Tynewydd", Llangan.
(01656) 860303
TREOES, LLANGAN & ST MARY HILL

Carol service

THIS year's St Canna's Church carol service which took place on Sunday, December 14 was very well attended with parishioners from Llangan, Treoes and further afield.

Rev David Davies made everyone welcome, including those who are not regular worshippers; and as always, Llangan school was represented, with the presentation of a decorated Christmas tree and a reading, The Mystery of the Incarnation, by Mr Luke Chaeter, deputy Head.

It was nice to see Rev Peter Raikes and his wife, both looking well and following the service everyone was invited to partake of a mince pie and a glass of sherry or orange juice.

A big thank you to Rev David Davies for the warm welcome to a non-regular churchgoer.

Out of order!

ST MARY HILL Church will celebrate their Christmas carol service on Sunday, December 21 at 11.15am, and once again everyone will be welcome.

I must apologise to anyone who has been trying to contact me by telephone as my phone has been out of use since November 11.

I have made every effort to get the fault rectified, but one is met by a machine or someone who is not capable of understanding plain English.

I await an answer from the general manager of British Telecommunications plc.

Christingle

GO along to Saron Chapel, Treoes on Wednesday, December 24 at 6pm and join in the Christingle service. There will be hymns and poetry reading and, as always, everyone will receive a warm welcome.

Pupils entertain

ON December 9, Llangan and Treoes senior citizens were entertained by the children of Llangan school and believe me, two young ladies were outstanding.

Look out Simon Cowell in a few years' time, these two young ladies may come knocking on your door!

It was an extremely enjoyable afternoon. Once again, a big thank you to the teaching staff for all the extra work involved in making these events so successful.

Thanks

IN conclusion, may I thank Caroline The GEM's manager, Don John, GEM Editor and everyone on the staff who have been so supportive through the many years I have been writing my weekly column in The GEM.

I will continue as long as I am able. A very Happy Christmas to you all and a peaceful New Year!

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION WITH CHORAL SOCIETY

THE Christmas tree-bedecked Holy Cross Church was the setting for a very festive concert given by Cowbridge Choral Society last Saturday.

The society were joined by children from St David's C-in-W Primary School, Colwinston, the Belles of St Mary's, Old Spice, and harp duo Ioan Wardaugh and Nia Fenn.

The concert, which was conducted by musical director Carole Lloyd, was a mix of traditional hymns and carols, together with less well-known pieces, all of which were enjoyed by an appreciative audience.

The schoolchildren sang a selection of songs, the most memorable probably being 'An Austrian went A-Yodelling' which was complete with very entertaining action!

The Belles' joyous handbells, ably led by Bert Thomas, gave a real Christmas feel to proceedings. Old Spice once again performed to their usual high standard, and Ioan and Nia entranced the audience with their harp playing of a piece by Handel, and music from *Frozen*.

Music was provided as accompanby Geoff Howells, as well as Carole Lloyd and Sandra Williams playing Strauss piano duets for the first time together for 27 years.

The society will be carol singing in the pubs in Cowbridge on December 18 in aid of the Noah's Ark Appeal, and will then take a break until resuming rehearsals on January 8 for the requiems by Mozart and Saint Saens.

The society rehearses every Thursday at 7.30pm in the United Free Church, Westgate Street – all are welcome to join.

Pupils win festive design competition

The Llanfair pupils show their winning designs to Mr Davies.

LLANFAIR Primary School had a visit from regional AM Andrew RT Davies, after pupils won a competition to design the AM and Leader of the Welsh Conservatives' Christmas cards.

Four winners were selected, all of whom received certificates.

The winners (pictured above with Mr Davies and their designs) were Katherine Boyd, Freddy Sunderland, Annie Wright and Amelia Tuckley. They each received a certificate and a voucher. Mr Davies, whose four children all attended Llanfair, said the overall standard was extremely high and that the children should all be proud of their efforts.

"I would like to thank the pupils for taking part and the headteacher for giving me the opportunity to come back to a school which holds many good memories for me personally," he commented.

The 41 Club celebrate at their annual get-together in Penllyne

THE pictures were taken at the Vale of Glamorgan 41 Club's Christmas dinner at The Fox in Penllyn.

The 41 Club was formed for members of Round Table who left that organisation at 40. There hasn't been a Round Table in the town for some years

MIKE WILCOCK

MIRACLE ON COWBRIDGE HIGH STREET

'TWAS the week before Christmas
And all through the town
Not a person was smiling
Their eyes looking down.

The parcels and presents were
packed up with care,
In hopes that the Post Office
would somehow be there.

When up in the sky there
arose such a clatter,
The people looked up to see
What was the matter.

When what to their wondering eyes
did appear?
But a little Post Office and eight tiny
reindeer;
With a little old man so lively and
quick,
They knew in a moment it must be St
Nick.

He whistled and shouted and called
them by name
"Now people of Cowbridge
It's all down to you –
To fight for your right to stand in a
queue.

"And natter and chatter until you
exclaim –
'Four 1st class, two seconds
And a parcel to Spain!'"

And laying his finger aside of his nose
With a wink and a nod he nimbly rose,
As light as a feather on new morning
dew;
And the people of Cowbridge
Formed a jovial queue!

DAWN JONES, Cowbridge.

Filco stores' £9,000 boost for Macmillan

STAFF at Filco Supermarkets, including Spar Llantwit Major, Plaza Toymaster and RB's have been raising money for Macmillan Cancer Support since 2013 and have so far donated £9,000.

Matthew Hunt from Filco Supermarkets, said: "We at Filco are very pleased to be in a position to hand over such a large cheque to Macmillan. As always our friends, colleagues and, of course, customers have really got behind us and supported us in the many events we have held.

"We are busy planning more fundraising events for the New Year and really look forward to donating even more vital funding to such a valued and worthwhile organisation."

Rebecca Parke, Local Fundraising Manager, said: "We are really pleased that the team at Filco Supermarkets have been raising money and awareness for Macmillan Cancer Support within their communities and what a brilliant job they have all done. From in-store promotions and raffles to running the Cardiff Half Marathon the team have all made a huge difference.

"Macmillan is almost entirely funded by donations so every penny that the team raise really will make help to make a difference to the support we can provide to people affected by cancer.'

For more information on Macmillan visit website macmillan.org.uk or contact the fundraising centre on 0300 1000 200.

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Cowbridge Chamber of Trade, and its members, say they want to thank all the people and organisations who contributed time and effort to ensure the Reindeer Parade was the most successful ever
FLASHBACK: Father Christmas and the reindeer take centre stage during the 2014 parade.

Michelin star chef lined up for foodie festival

THE Cowbridge Food and Drink Festival has announced that Michelin star chef James Sommerin will demonstrate at next year's show which will, for the first time in its 11 year history, take place in May.

The award winning two-day foodie extravaganza will start on Sunday, May 24 and run across the second May Bank Holiday weekend. James Sommerin, who won his Michelin star as head chef of The Crown at Whitebrook in 2007, will appear on the Monday at 12:45pm in the Demo Theatre and demonstrate his passion for food with distinct flavours and local heritage.

Welshman James and his wife Louise now own Restaurant James Sommerin at The Esplanade in Penarth.

Bar 44 and The Bear Hotel will also take to the demo stage, as well as festival favourite Anand George. Anand is the multi-award winning chef behind Cardiff's Purple Poppadom and will be a familiar face to frequent Cowbridge Food and Drink Festival goers, having appeared numerous times.

Thousands flock to the market town each year to sample the high quality artisan produce available and it is expected this year will be bigger than ever, having moved from its normal October slot to spring.

John Davies, Festival Chairman said: "We're delighted to confirm James Sommerin as a guest demonstrator at next year's festival and he joins what is looking to be an exciting line-up.

"We've enjoyed a hugely successful ten years of the Cowbridge Food and Drink Festival and by moving to May, when the weather will hopefully shine on us, we expect to attract a wider audience to enjoy this fantastic weekend of food and family fun."

It's not too late to apply to be an exhibitor with applications still being taken until December 31. Full details can be found on the newly launched website www.cowbridgefoodanddrink.org where the full line-up will be announced on January 7.

Tickets – which cost £5 per day or £8 for the weekend – can also be purchased online for the first time with a 10 per cent discount on all pre-sale tickets. Children 12 years and under go free.

Music, verse, mince pies and mulled wine!

ON December 10, Cowbridge U3A was entertained by Old Spice Barbershop Quartet with a set of old standards and another of Christmas favourites, in between which were a series of poetry readings.

Afterwards, we all enjoyed mulled wine and mince pies which were greatly appreciated by one and all.

Cowbridge U3A quiz team earlier visited Cardiff U3A and took on U3A teams from across south Wales – and came out triumphant. Modesty forbids me to mention the names in the team – Gwerfyl, Hywel, Fran, Dafydd and Tim – as they are all too shy!

The next meeting is on January 14 at 2pm at the Town Hall on 'The Diaries of Richard Burton' by Prof Chris Williams.

TB

How town misses post office as boxes fill up, double quick

RIGHT:
It is the first Christmas, probably for decades, that Cowbridge has had to cope without a post office during the festive season. The post boxes have been overflowing with post and parcels. Photographer Mike Wilcock captured the moment on Monday, December 15, when local resident Alf Charles arrived at the post box at Penny Lane and found it full at 11am! How people miss the large box that was housed at the post office. Co-op staff, who work there now, report people still come in looking for a post office.

Cadets' tour of aerospace centre

CADETS at 293 (Cowbridge) Squadron Air Training Corps were hosted for an evening by the staff of Cardiff and Vale College's International Centre for Aerospace Training (ICAT).

They were shown around this world-class facility by a team led by lecturer Ceri Jones. The highlight was undoubtedly a tour around the centre's workshop, which houses a retired Royal Navy Jetstream aircraft, once used to carry out observer training, and a Bulldog, which once served as an elementary flying training aircraft with the Royal Air Force.

The cadets had been with the squadron for only a few weeks and this was an important first opportunity to familiarise themselves and get to grips with aircraft systems.

One element of the tour that proved especially popular was the close look at jet engine technology from across the decades, which ranged from the rather compact Adour engine from the BAe Hawk to the rather imposing Rolls Royce RB211 turbofan engine found on many large airliners.

Cadets also took turns to examine the engines with borescopes.

Both the staff of ICAT and the squadron are keen to promote awareness of the different paths young people can take towards a career in aviation.

Squadron officer, Flying Officer John Williamson, said: "One of the key aims of the Air Cadet Organisation is to promote and encourage an interest in aviation, and not just within the context of our parent service, the Royal Air Force. The RAF may well be withdrawing from the area, but in our part of Wales there is a hub of aerospace businesses, ranging from British Airways Maintenance Cardiff and the General Electric engine facility in Nantgarw, to a range of smaller businesses developing within the Vale, centred on St Athan and Cardiff International Airport.

"Young people with an interest in aviation need to be aware that there are opportunities to build an exciting, well-paid career in the field right in our own back yard. For many of them, that career may well start at ICAT."

'THINK AGAIN!' – call by anti-fracking protesters in Cowbridge

RESIDENTS at Llantrithyd and other anti-fracking campaigners from across south Wales, held a festive rally in Cowbridge town centre on Saturday, December 13.

It culminated in the delivery of online and paper petitions calling on Evfil Ltd to take heed of the strength of local opposition to the drilling.

Christmas shoppers looked on as the petitions, signed by some 2,000 people, were collected from outside the town hall by Santa Claus riding in a horse-drawn cart.

Local Men's Forum hears tragic tale of Scott of the Antarctic

DOCTOR Tom Sharpe, the speaker at last week's Barry Men's Forum, spoke on the inhospitable Antarctic continent.

Apart from being the coldest place in the world, it is also the driest and highest most isolated continent. The North Pole and the Arctic is an ice field surrounded by continents whereas the South Pole and Antarctic is a continent surrounded by sea and covered with ice.

Some 100 years ago, very little was known about Antarctica; on maps drawn from that time it was considered to be a group of small islands covered in ice.

Robert Falcon Scott (1868 –1912) was an officer in the Royal Navy. He was most famous for his scientific interests and his exploration of the Antarctic. He led two expeditions to Antarctica.

In 1901-1904, he led the first British Antarctic Expedition, organised by the Royal Society and the Royal Geographic Society. It aimed to carry out scientific research and geographic exploration in what was an unknown area. Scott was accompanied by Ernest Shackleton, Edward Wilson, Frank Wild, Tom Crean and William Lashly.

The expedition travelled to within 100 miles of the South Pole, but was forced to turn back due to lack of supplies.

Scott's heroic, ill-fated second expedition (1910-1912) commenced when *Terra Nova* sailed from Cardiff in June 1910; it was powered by Welsh steam coal and sail.

After their mechanical sledges were abandoned, Scott, Williams, Oates, Bowers and Evans walked to the South Pole, dragging their sleds behind them.

They arrived at the South Pole on January 17, 1912, only to find Norwegian explorer, Roald Amundsen, had arrived at the South Pole before them.

During Scott's return to his base camp, the weather closed in and the five men perished on the journey.

After the festive celebrations, on Thursday, January 8, Roger Williams will be speaking on the topic of 'Jerusalem'.

The Forum meets at Trinity Presbyterian Church Hall, Aberystwyth Crescent, every Thursday at 10.15am. New members are very welcome.

MC

Eco children inspire adults to be creative

ABOUT 50 people joined the rangers at the Forest Lodge, Porthkerry, on December 6, for an afternoon of Christmas craft making.

The session saw children and adults alike creating eco-friendly Christmas decorations made from either recycled materials, or things collected from within the park.

The finished products included woven twig star decorations, clay reindeer models, and Christmas wish wood cookies.

Mel Stewart, Park Ranger, said: "The children were so imaginative with what they created, and their enthusiasm was so contagious that by the end of the afternoon, nearly all the adults had created something to take home, too!"

Town traders' window awards

JUDGING has taken place in the Bridgend town window and stall dressing competition.

Shops: Ty Hafan Store, The Rhiw Centre; T & H Morris Butchers, Dunraven Place; Clippaz Hair Salon, Market Street; Hatters Tea Room, Nolton Street.

Rhiw Market Stalls: Daffodil Gifts; The Coffee Cabin.

Family's desperate plea for health board's support over cancer drug

A Dinas Powys man is appealing to the Cardiff and the Vale University Health Board to allow doctors to prescribe him a vital anti-cancer drug.

by TIM CHAPMAN

Mr Ronald Squires (74) believes 'Axitinib', a drug that interferes in the growth of cancer cells, could make a significant improvement to his health.

MP Alun Cairns said he had called on the board to review its decision to refuse him the drug.

The family understand that patients in Scotland and England are able to access it.

The board told The GEM it was reviewing information and would be in touch with Mr Squires and his family as soon as possible.

Mr Squires told The GEM: "My consultant at Velindre said Axitinib would be the best drug for me.

"The consultant asked for the drug, but was turned down, and an appeal was turned down too.

"People in Scotland and England can get the drug. I worked all my life in industry and paid all my stoppages to the National Health. I think people across the United Kingdom should be able to get the same treatment."

Mr Squires said the care he had received from the NHS had been "brilliant", but he felt let down by the local health board.

He said he had been sustained through a very difficult period by the support of his family and the community, and was thankful for Mr Cairns' help.

Mr Squires' daughter Lynne explained: "The drug my father is being denied could make a considerable difference to his life in terms of reduced side effects and also extend his life.

"Friends and family in England have said 'come and live with us' so he can get the drug, but he has lived in his house for 46 years."

In total, the family have made three official attempts to get the drug prescribed and Lynne is now preparing a 'judicial review'.

What adds to the family's frustration is that the drug is close to approval, and also that they have been told that if Mr Squires provides a top-up of £4,000 a month – the difference in cost between his current drug and Axitinib – he could have it. It is money he does not have.

A patient in Newport, Mr David Southwood, who was initially paying towards the drug, said he would move to Somerset if necessary so he could get it free in England.

The Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, which covers the Newport area, recently approved the drug for Mr Southwood.

Mr Cairns said: "Ronald Squires is a victim of a postcode lottery in health care. If he lived in England he would be prescribed the drug through the NHS Cancer Drugs Fund."

Wales does not have an equivalent drugs fund.

Mr Cairns continued: "Having spoken to his consultant and the clinical approval body NICE I have discovered that the drug has almost cleared the approval process.

"In view of the impact it could have on Ron, there is little benefit in waiting. The difference in time could be critical.

"Ron's case is also strengthened by the complexities of his condition. The side effects of his current drug are generating other health issues. It is believed that Axitinib would help overcome this.

"To be denied a drug that has been shown to have such a positive effect is devastating for Ron and his family.

"We need to do all we can to get the review that Ron so desperately needs. I call on the community to write to or email Maria Battle as chairman of the LHB to support the case for the review."

Mr Cairns said suggestions that the family could top up the difference of the treatment costs were "ridiculous".

A spokesman for Cardiff and Vale University Health Board said that NICE had postponed publishing a decision until February but added: "The Chair has asked for all the information to be reviewed as a matter of urgency and will be speaking with the family as soon as possible."

A Welsh Government spokesperson emphasised that it was unable to comment on individual cases.

He said: "In determining the effectiveness of medicines such as Axitinib, and their potential to benefit patients, we are guided by the recommendations of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), and the All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG).

"If either of these bodies recommends the use of a medicine, it will be made available to patients in Wales for treatment of the relevant indication.

"NICE has today (December 16) published the final draft guidance recommending Axitinib as an option for the treatment of advanced renal cell carcinoma. There will now be a period of consultation.

"Health boards have a statutory responsibility to comply with NICE technology appraisals no later than three months from the publication of the final guidance."

From left to right family members with their local MP: Jill Harvey (daughter), Alun Cairns MP, Ronald Squires, Marilyn Squires, Lynne Squires (daughter).

Mayor's British Legion cheque

The Mayor of Barry, Coun Jeff Evans, recently presented a cheque to the Royal British Legion. The Legion provided 100 poppy wreaths which were laid by children from schools in Barry at Merthyr Dyfan Cemetery on Friday, November 7 to mark the centenary of World War One. The council donated the cost of the wreaths. The cheque was received by Mr Keith Harris, chairman and Mrs Joan Lake, president.

Primary school's pantomime success!

JUNIOR children at Llanilltud Fawr Primary School excelled themselves this week when they performed the pantomime 'Aladdin Trouble'.

After many weeks of rehearsals, the children took to the stage for two sell-out shows. As is tradition in the school, Year 5 children take the lead roles, and are supported by years 3, 4 and 6 children.

Aladdin and Princess Jasmine were beautifully played by Corey Lougher and Emily Trundle, with the pantomime baddies Abanazar and Wantu (Evan Harris and Emily Fry) adding that extra bit of drama.

Sean McLoughlin excelled as Widow Twankey and Molly Kaye admirably kept the story flowing in her role as the storyteller Scheherazade.

The delighted audiences were treated to a witty tale of good versus evil, colourful characters and a Genie (Maisy Fry) granting Aladdin wishes to let love conquer all.

"I couldn't be more proud of all of the children. They have worked so hard for the last couple of months and battled sickness bugs to put on an outstanding show," said Katy Holloway (director).

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Carols in the Castle

CHURCHES Together in Cowbridge and District will present Carols in the Castle on Monday, December 22 meeting at the cattle market at 6pm.

"Bring a torch and wear walking shoes to walk to St Quentin's Castle for readings and carols under the stars and join us for this magical starlit Christmas celebration," said Rev Heather Weddell.

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Donors save lives

CHARITY supporters in the Vale are helping to save thousands of lives through cash pledges they have made this year.

St John Cymru Wales has been promised just over £9,500 by 147 new donors in the county in 2014. The funds will help the charity achieve its aim of having a first aider on every street in the Wales by 2017.

"The money that has been donated in the Vale of Glamorgan could pay for 52 classes that would teach a group of 12 parents infant or child first aid, or first aid sessions for 80 classes of 30 school children."

Alison Palfrey, director of fundraising at St John Cymru Wales, said: "Across Wales, donors have pledged almost £340,000 to the charity this year, which has meant we can give more and more people essential first aid skills that can save lives.

"By visiting www.stjohnwales.org.uk anyone can give a donation that could one day help save their life."

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YOUNG CHEFS COMPETE IN ROTARY COMPETITION

ON December 3, the Rotary Club of Barry held its Young Chef competition at Bryn Hafren Comprehensive School, the first stage of a Rotary organised national competition for young people to develop their skills in a range of disciplines.

The competition was, once again, hosted by Sue Hooper, the head of home economics at Bryn Hafren, with support from her colleague Sue Johnston. Four students from the school competed for the Stanley Brierley Shield named after a past District Governor of Rotary from Barry.

The competition was judged by Darren Greenland from the hospitality and catering department of Cardiff and Vale College and by Janet Scicluna, principal consultant from Janet Scicluna Associates, who commended the contestants on the challenging menus they had chosen and the very high standards of their cooking and presentation.

The winner of the shield was Sydney McLean closely followed by Lauren Wileman who held off close challenges from both Emily Halford and Rachele Walters. The four competitors had been chosen to compete following their success in a school competition.

The president of Barry Rotary Club, Robin Pitcher, presented Sydney with her shield and handed certificates to all the young chefs who competed. He too was impressed by the standard they achieved and complimented them on taking part with such skill and enthusiasm.

Sydney will now go on to the next round representing Barry in the Cardiff and Vale area final, which will be held early in the new year, and if successful will proceed to the south Wales competition.

For information on Rotary, speak to Barry Rotary Club past president Peter Battle on 01446 710204 or online at www.ribi.org.

Club members meet weekly on Thursdays in the Glenbrook Inn in Barry at 6.30pm. Membership is open to women as well as men.

Darren Greenland of Cardiff and Vale College, Janet Scicluna of Janet Scicluna Associates and Sue Hooper of Bryn Hafren, with Sydney McLean.

Quiz for the NFU ladies!

AFTER the recent Christmas carol service, the NFU ladies headed back to the Penllyn Hall, to sample the fabulous Christmas banquet that all the members had prepared.

A quiz was one of the highlights of the evening and no, it was not group secretary David Harris who was the first non-royal on the postage stamp, but (of course) William Shakespeare.

The ladies reminisced on the autumn visit to the Bristol Hippodrome to see *Top Hat*; it was a memorable day ending with a meal at Magor.

Ann Rees, chairperson, would like to extend her good wishes for Christmas to all members and looks forward to welcoming them at the annual dinner in January.

JS

PACT meetings

GIBBONSDOWN PACT at Barry Rugby Club, Merthyr Dyfan Road, Barry, on Monday, January 5 at 7pm.

DINAS POWYS PACT at St Mary's Church Hall, Edith Road, Dinas Powys, on Monday, January 5 at 7pm.

CADOC PACT at Palmerston Community and Learning Centre on Wednesday, January 7 at 6pm.

COWBRIDGE PACT at Cowbridge Fire Station, Druids Green on Monday, January 19 at 11am.

ST AUGUSTINE PACT at the hall in Bellevue Park off Albert Road, Penarth on Wednesday, January 21 at 7pm.

LLANTWIT PACT at Llantwit Leisure Centre on Wednesday, January 21 at 7pm.

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Finalising the fairer funding settlement

OVER the past few weeks I have been finalising the Welsh Government Budget for 2015-16, responding to the Chancellor's autumn Statement and progressing the talks with the UK Government for a fairer funding settlement for Wales.

On December 9, the National Assembly approved our final Budget, which will safeguard key public services and boost the economy. There will be more funding for infrastructure (capital) projects in transport, housing, schools, health and a new £150m announcement for financing flood and coastal risk manangement.

I called this Budget the 'Priorities for Wales' and these include £425m of extra funding over two years for the Welsh NHS- to which we are adding the £70m funding for the health service for Wales announced in the Autumn Statement. This means increased investment in our Welsh NHS by more than half a billion pounds over two years.

I believe that this is what the people of Wales want and expect of their Government and it will support our doctors, nurses and all those who work in the health service- including our volunteer first responders. I am very proud to be the patron of the Barry First Responders who have served our community faithfully over the past 10 years.

A focus on preventative measures and early intervention has been a key feature of this Budget, which is set against a backdrop of cuts of 9 per cent to the Welsh Government, over this Assembly term, by the UK Government.

This leads us to invest in measures that help avoid problems occurring in the first place – interventions which can support children and families, vulnerable people and those at risk as a result of health needs or disability or loss of jobs and low incomes.

It also means investing in flood prevention, warm and affordable housing, skills and job opportunities as well as first class school buildings, public transport and improved roads and pavements.

In making the case for 'fairer funding' for Wales, I am backed by all the parties represented in the Assembly. This was expressed in a unanimous vote in the Assembly in October to work towards a fairer settlement in the funding we get from the UK Government, via the outdated Barnett Formula.

I was able to discuss this with the Scottish Finance Minister, John Swinney MSP in Edinburgh and with Danny Alexander MP, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, as we make the case for a fairer deal for Wales.

In the final Budget debate, I spoke about the principles that underpin my commitment to delivering a Budget for Wales in these most challenging of times for public finances.

I said we needed to achieve 'fairer shares' in the way we distribute our funding to protect the vulnerable and tackle inequalities. On our Budget Debate day the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) reported that 'inequality' with deepening divides between the rich and poor, is not good for the economy, or society.

There is no doubt the economy is recovering, which is great news for Wales, and the Welsh Government is playing its part to make that happen – but it is recovering faster for some, but not all.

This has been clearly exposed by the low tax receipts as a result of low wages and part-time work, leading to higher than forecast borrowing by the UK Government.

The recent cross-party report on Foodbanks revealed that delays in payment of welfare benefits and low incomes are causing hardship for many vulnerable households- including those here in the Vale.

As we approach Christmas and enjoy the festivities, can I thank all those who volunteer in their communities and work towards breaking down those inequalities which cause hardship and help vulnerable people through difficult times in their lives.

I would particularly like to thank the Vale Foodbank for their hard work, their commitment and their support for people at the sharp end of these circumstances; for more information contact *valefoodbank@ymail.com*.

It is a great privilege to attend so many wonderful school, choir, church and community carol concerts in these weeks leading up to Christmas.

I would like to thank everyone involved in these events and activities which bring the Christmas spirit into our lives.

May I wish you a peaceful and happy Christmas and a happy New Year.

ASSEMBLY NOTES

by **Jane Hutt AM** *(Minister for Finance)*

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BAKING AT AMELIA TRUST

THERE will be a Kids' Christmas Baking session at The Amelia Trust Farm, on December 20 at 11am.

This offers the chance to create a box of Christmas goodies to take home and enjoy. The session includes: decorating Christmas cookies; decorating cupcakes; making and decorating Christmas chocolates.

The cost is £3 per child. Children need to be accompanied by an adult and the session is suitable for children aged four – 11 years. Homemade lunch and refreshments will be available to buy in the visitor centre throughout the session.To book a place, email: general@ameliatrust.org.uk or call 01446 782030. The Amelia Trust Farm is just off Five Mile Lane, Barry.

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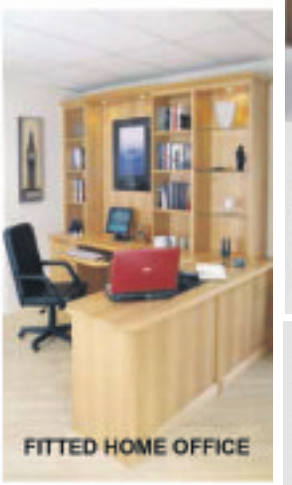

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BUSY YEAR FOR VALE BRASS BAND

THE Vale of Glamorgan Brass Band will conclude their 'mini tour' of the Vale when they give a concert of Christmas music at All Saints Church, Victoria Road, Penarth, this Saturday (December 20) at 7.30pm.

The band has been celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2014 and has performed concerts at Rhoose, Fonmon Castle, Dinas Powys and Penmark throughout the year.

The year started with a joint concert with Porthcawl Male Choir on St David's Day, which was closely followed by the first competition of the year in Merthyr around late March.

This entailed extra rehearsal time for the test piece 'The Dark Side of the Moon' by Paul Lovatt Cooper. Being relatively new to the competition stage, the band gave a good account of themselves among more experienced competitors.

Musical director David Short introduced new music into rehearsal in preparation for the forthcoming busy concert season. The anniversary concert was held in Rhoose and the band welcomed Robert Westacott as special guest soloist for the week-end.

Robert joined the band for rehearsal on the Friday and the week-end finished with a social and presentation evening.

No sooner had one concert ended than it was on to the next. The band was invited to play at the First World War Commemoration Day in Penarth where suitable music from the era had to be learned.

The event was held in The Windsor Gardens Bandstand, a venue that hadn't been used for many years and was organised by the Friends of St Augustine's Church. A crowd of over 200 gathered around the bandstand to listen.

The band then had to prepare for the National Eisteddfod in Llanelli where they finished fourth in the 'Own Choice Entertainment' competition, and on the following day presented a programme near Penarth Pier.

After a short break, the band was 'on tour' again, this time playing in the library at Fonmon Castle. The band was warmly received by the audience as well as guest vocalist Patsy Hunt, making her debut with the band.

Then, it was on to the next competition which was held once again in Merthyr. The band were a little unfortunate to finish just outside the prize positions, missing out on third place by two points.

The autumn concert was held at Dinas Powys, where the special guest soloist was euphonium player Robert Burnett.

So, a busy anniversary year is almost at an end with the final concert on Saturday.

Tickets are £5 and will be available at the door or contact 07917-796841.

The Vale of Glamorgan Band would like to take this opportunity to thank their sponsors, A Class Apart uniform suppliers of Dinas Powys and CJ Contract Travel Services for their support, and to the people of the Vale for attending the concerts this year. **PM**

Vale wins two coveted 'Fields in Trust' awards

Winners of the Centenary Fields Trailblazers award.

THE Vale Council has won two awards at the Fields in Trust awards 2014.

The event saw the council pick up both the local authority Partner of the Year award for Wales and a Centenary Fields Trailblazers award.

The trailblazer award was given to Alexandra Park, which was given official Centenary Field status by Fields in Trust and the Royal British Legion in July of this year.

Llantwit Major Town Council was also the only Welsh finalist for the Partner of the Year award in the Town and Parish Council category.

Coun Gwyn John, cabinet member and Armed Forces champion for the Vale, said: "I'm incredibly proud of these awards. A lot of effort has gone in to the parks and fields across the Vale, particularly our trailblazing Alexandra Park, and I think everyone involved deserves huge congratulations."

The Fields in Trust awards seek to recognise and reward some of the many organisations who contribute most to the success of the trust's work.

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Friends of the Earth group's concerns over local controversies and actions

BARRY and Vale FoE's last meeting welcomed FoE Cymru director, Gareth Clubb, who spoke about actions FoE Cymru are taking over the proposed M4 route through special environments around Newport; the continued demand for open-cast coal; and the madness of building a racetrack on top of the mountains, at Rassau. All of these proposals would cause huge environmental damage.

The group felt that development money from the new Funfair and associated housing, should be spent on making Barry Island's Promenade and Frontage more pedestrian friendly, with less parking space and further improvements for public access, including provision for park and ride facilities in the town.

Vale councillor Ian Johnson provided useful insights into proposed mergers between the Vale and Cardiff/Bridgend Councils.

The group have asked Coun Johnson to cut through the bureaucratic fog the Vale Council have put up over changes to plans for an incinerator on Barry Dock.

Local footpath changes remain a concern – some people are unaware that footpaths still marked on maps lead through their new front doors!

KEITH STOCKDALE
Barry and Vale FoE Coordinator

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RUGBY PLAYERS GIVE A £1,000 BOOST TO CHILDREN'S HOSPICE

PICTURED: (from left to right) Cardiff Blues player, Rhys Patchell, general manager of Wessex Garages, Gareth Howells, Rick O'Shea from BBC Scrum V and Cardiff Blues player, Alex Cuthbert at the event at the Wessex Garages dealership.

RUGBY fans attended a charity fundraising event hosted by a car dealership last week for an opportunity to meet players from Cardiff Blues.

They helped raise £1,017.93 for Tŷ Hafan at the 'A Night in with the Blues' event at Wessex Garages on Hadfield Road.

"As one of the Cardiff Blues' official sponsors we thought it would be great to host an event so that people could meet some of the players including Alex Cuthbert, Rhys Patchell, Adam Jones and Jarrod Hoeata face to face," said general manager Gareth Howells.

A question and answer session was compered by Rick O'Shea from BBC's Scrum V and a charity raffle had the chance to win a signed personalised shirt, signed rugby ball and a season ticket for the Cardiff Blues for 2015/2016.

"Two limited edition Groggs signed by the players will be going on an online auction soon. All of the money raised during the event and from the Groggs will be donated to Tŷ Hafan."

Lucy and Rhodri 'sparkle' at Ty Hafan pantomime

LUCY and Rhodri Owen brought their own Christmas sparkle to Tŷ Hafan when they visited the hospice on December 8.

The couple, who are Tŷ Hafan Ambassadors, have been avid supporters of the charity for many years and were both excited to have been asked to take part in the charity's *Frozen*-themed pantomime.

After handing out presents to children and chatting to families, BBC Wales newsreader Lucy tweeted a photo, and said: "Santa and his little helper had a wonderful morning with the children – great panto!"

Ruth Kearney, media and communications manager at Tŷ Hafan, said: "Rhodri is such a pro at playing Santa and Lucy was an amazing elf! They are such great sports and are fantastic ambassadors for Tŷ Hafan."

Tŷ Hafan organises a pantomime in the lounge of the hospice every Monday and Friday in December. Staff, corporate supporters and families take part in the panto which is just one of the ways Tŷ Hafan makes Christmas extra special for life-limited children and their families.

To find out how you can support Tŷ Hafan, please visit www.tyhafan.org.

Town market

COWBRIDGE Country Market will be held on Friday, December 19 (from 9.30am – 11.30am) offering a final chance to stock up on delicious Christmas goodies and preserves.

Valeways walks

ON Thursday, January 1 at 1pm, a New Year's Day walk starts at St Peter's Church, Mill Road, Dinas Powys.

NEW FLIGHTS ARE SET TO TAKE OFF!

THE first flight of the north-south Wales air service operated by Links Air departed from Cardiff Airport at Rhoose on December 10.

Links Air will operate two daily return flights but at new times to allow for a longer working day at both destinations. Initially, there will be 0740 and 1625 departures from Cardiff on Monday to Thursday, and 0740 and 1525 on Fridays. The return service will leave Anglesey at 0855 and 1740 on weekdays (1640 on Fridays).

The introduction of an earlier 0725 Cardiff departure in spring 2015, combined with the later afternoon departure, will offer an extra 35-minutes a day at each destination. Links Air will also connect the service with new commercial routes in spring 2015.

The service is supported by the Welsh Government to "improve business connectivity and promote economic growth".

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The GEM would like to wish all readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year - our next edition is on January 1, 2015.

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IT'S JUST A SNAPSHOT... but campaign group's survey provides interesting views on planned council merger

by GEM REPORTER

A campaigning organisation that provides a voice for people who want to see improvements in the town of Barry has run a survey to find out what people think about the Vale Council merging with another authority.

The Williams' Commission has said it would like to see Welsh Councils – currently numbering 22 – halved.

The Vale Council and Bridgend County Borough Council have expressed an interest in merging.

Dennis Harkus of FocusBARRY explained that the survey had been run on the group's Facebook page and described it as "a snapshot of opinions".

Mr Harkus stresses he is not claiming it as scientific, but it is 'grist to the mill' of the debate.

So what did the survey come up with?

One question was: How satisfied are you with the Vale Council's strategy with regard to merging councils? A total of 61 people responded: one person (1.64 per cent) was very satisfied; nine people (14.75 per cent) were satisfied; 15 people (24.59 per cent) were dissatisfied; 36 people (59.02 per cent) were very dissatisfied.

Among the comments made by respondents were:

'Some decisions are too important to be made by a select number of people that have a vested interest in making choices that have a conflict of interest'; 'Barry has more in common with Cardiff and being allied to the capital city would bring more benefits to the town'; 'Should be a public vote'; 'Would be happier if the Vale stayed on their own, but would rather Bridgend than Cardiff'.

One person suggested a split – west of St Athan and Llantwit should go to Bridgend, east of there should merge with Cardiff.

Another person said the Vale had little in common with Bridgend.

Another question posed was: Do you agree that the Vale Council should seek a merger with Bridgend?

A total of 61 people responded: 11 people (18.03 per cent) said 'Yes'; 50 people (81.97 per cent) said 'No'.

Some of the comments were: 'Bridgend is the only option unless we want to become a suburb of Cardiff. Not sure either is a particularly good 'fit', but think Bridgend is a better choice'; 'What can Bridgend offer the Vale?'; 'Where is the sense in merging towns like Penarth and Dinas Powys with Bridgend?'; 'No tangible reasons have been given which leaves me deeply suspicious that the merger with Bridgend is purely motivated by political self interest'.

Another question was: Would you prefer that the Vale Council should seek a merger with Cardiff?

There were 61 responses – 41 people (67.21 per cent) said 'Yes'; 20 people (32.79 per cent) said 'No'.

Among the points made were: 'There are green shoots in Barry which may be encouraged to grow. I believe Barry would become one of the Cardiff region's big assets'; 'Cardiff and the Vale have tourism in common and it is such an important part of our economy'; 'Health, education, leisure, work – a merger with Cardiff is the only sensible option'; 'The only problem I have with Cardiff is that they might pile thousands of houses in and around Barry...'

If a merger of the Vale and Bridgend does go ahead it will transgress the commission's recommendation that mergers should not cross health board boundaries.

The Welsh government plans to respond to any expressions of interest on mergers by January 5, 2015.

Sad Seren deserves better start to life

DOGS Trust Bridgend is appealing to local dog lovers to help find a home for their longest serving canine resident, Seren, who came to the charity five years ago as a puppy after being thrown from a car.

Seren has been at the rehoming centre for over 35 years in dog years which means she has been overlooked by over 10,000 potential new owners. Her carers have put together a gallery of Seren through the seasons to show how long she has been waiting for a loving owner to come along.

Seren originally came into Dogs Trust when she was just a year old. She went to a home for a few months in but was sadly returned due to a change in her owner's circumstances.

She has now been back at Dogs Trust Bridgend since August and is one of the centre's long-term residents. Despite her difficult start in life staff have

worked hard gaining her trust and she is such a sweet natured girl who adores people. Her carers think she is overlooked simply because she is a black crossbreed.

Dogs Trust Bridgend Supporter Relations Officer Linda Feagan, explains: "I love my job and have been lucky enough to have seen thousands of dogs find their forever homes over the last five years but nothing could really compare to seeing Seren finding a loving new family of her own in time for Christmas.

"I know I shouldn't have favourites, but Seren is a real star – she is such a gentle, fun loving dog and I have a real soft spot for her. Seren is a friendly and affectionate girl who could live with a family with older teenagers.

"She needs to be with someone who works only part time, as she does like someone to give her lots of hugs during the day."

Anyone interested in rehoming Seren, please visit *www.dogstrust.org.uk*. Dogs Trust Bridgend has dogs of all shapes and sizes looking for homes and, when matching dogs with new owners, staff will consider a wide range of homes and circumstances providing that they will fit the requirements of the dog and provide them with a loving, lasting home.

NEW RURAL BUS SERVICE IS WELCOMED IN THE VALE

AS reported in The GEM last week, the Vale Council will be supporting a new bus service between Llantwit Major, Cowbridge and Talbot Green from January and "opening up a range of new public transport links across the Vale".

Coun Lis Burnett, cabinet member for transport, said: "I am delighted to announce this new service. Since the demise of the previous bus service on this route, there has been a clear need to establish a frequent regular reliable daytime south-north rural bus link between Llantwit Major, Llandow, Cowbridge and Talbot Green.

"Thanks to the hard work of council officers, this will now be introduced next month."

The new 321 service, which will be operated by New Adventure Travel, will commence on January 5. The route will link with that of the existing 320 supported service which currently runs from Cardiff to Talbot Green via St Georges, St Brides-super-Ely, Peterston-super-Ely, Pendoylan, Clawdd Coch, Hensol and Pontyclun.

As a result, passengers will now be able to travel between destinations such as Peterston-super-Ely and Pendoylan and Cowbridge.

The new 321 will also offer passengers a link to the 303 and 304 services at Llantwit Major, the X2 at Cowbridge and the 404 at Talbot Green.

Kevyn Jones, managing director of New Adventure Travel, said: "We are very pleased to be awarded this contract and we look forward to working with the Vale of Glamorgan Council to develop the route into a key bus service in the areas it serves."

As part of the agreement reached with New Adventure Travel reduced fares will be available to passengers aged between 16 and 21 years old on bus services 320 and 321.

During the trial period production of a Vale Young Persons (VYP) card will entitle those aged 16-21 to child fares rather than the full adult price. The commencement date of this trial will be announced in due course.

T, Jane Hutt, who said: "I have been working closely with the Vale Council and rural Vale residents with regard to improving village bus services and last month, met with residents and Coun Lis Burnett at the Civic Offices.

"I am delighted that the Vale Council has since secured the new 321 bus service which will link with existing supported bus service 320 to serve residents in Llantwit Major, Llandow, Cowbridge, Aberthin and Ystradowen.

"The new bus service 321 will also offer passengers opportunities to link to Bus Service 303/304 (Bridgend to Cardiff Bay via St Athan, Rhoose, Barry, Dinas Powys and Cardiff) at Llantwit Major, Bus Service X2 (Porthcawl to Cardiff) at Cowbridge and Bus Service 404 (Pontypridd to Bridgend) at Talbot Green."

'Do something positive to help blind veterans'

A MILITARY charity with a centre in Llandudno is inviting Welsh people to think about New Year's resolutions and consider making a positive change in their lives, while raising funds for Blind Veterans UK.

The Blind Veterans UK 100 Day Positive Change Challenge aims to motivate individuals and organisations in Wales to take on their own beginning any time between January 1 and January 14, doing something positive for 100 days and requesting sponsorship for their efforts.

The charity provides blind and vision-impaired ex-Service men and women with help to lead independent and fulfilling lives, and is celebrating 100 years of service in 2015.

Challenges are anything that will result in a positive change for the individual – go without alcohol for 100 days, go for a walk every evening for 100 days, read a book for half an hour in the evening instead of watching TV, do a good deed every day for 100 days, give up puddings for 100 days – the list is endless.

The campaign is open to anyone. Families can sign up as a group to make it easier to stay on course throughout the challenge.

Even staff at Blind Veterans UK are joining in to make a positive change. Regional Fundraiser for the charity, Victoria Beech's own Positive Change Challenge is to carry out 30 minutes of exercise every day for 100 days.

Victoria said: "Blind Veterans UK strives to encourage our veterans to take positive steps in their own lives via the support, rehabilitation and training we provide. Undertaking this challenge gives the public the opportunity to raise funds to continue our work while making their own positive change."

Registration is free but Blind Veterans UK does ask that people or groups commit to raise a minimum of £10 (equal to 10p for every day of their challenge) through donations and sponsorship.

To receive more information about the 100 Day Positive Change Challenge and to sign up, contact victoria.beech@blindveterans.org.uk or 01492 864574.

A charity links Vale to Uganda

VALE for Africa, the charity linking the Vale with a community in Uganda, recently welcomed two Ugandan doctors for a week long visit.

Dr Proscovia Arach, a paediatric ophthalmologist, and Dr Thomas Ochar, medical director of the District Government Hospital in Tororo, Uganda, spent time observing clinical practice at the University Hospital of Wales, at the optometry college, and with local optician Annette Dobbs at her practice in Barry.

They also visited the Senedd, and joined Vale for Africa supporters for a meal at the Vegetarian Food Studio in Cardiff.

Ted Arbuthnot, Chair of Vale of Africa, said: "This visit has been a great success, and we are very grateful to the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board for the welcome they extended to our guests, and to all our supporters for enabling this visit to happen.

"We want to continue to work with our Ugandan partners to help prevent and treat serious eye disease, which is a common problem in this area of Uganda."

Vale for Africa supports a scholarship enabling a Ugandan student to study in Wales. It is reliant on volunteers and donors. New members welcome. For more information contact www.valeforafrica.org.uk. **SB**

Festive coffee

THERE will be a Christmas coffee morning at Llantwit Major Bowls Club on Saturday, December 20 (from 10am to 12pm).

Books, cakes, bric-a-brac stall and raffle. Entrance £3 with cup of tea or coffee and mince pie. Everyone welcome.

OPEN SUNDAY DECEMBER 21ST
10am to 4pm

Hot Stoves & gifts for Christmas

Christmas Trees now on sale!

Discounted prices for brands including Emma Bridgewater, Sophie Allport, Bronte throws and Joseph Joseph cookware.

Our Gallery Café has a colourful choice of artwork including originals by Stan Rosenthal, hand carved ornaments and unique pottery by Ralph Jandrell.

... and lots of fireside accessories, logs and kindling to stock up for a warm winter.

CHRISTMAS OPENING TIMES

Tues 23rd 9am to 5pm
Wed 24th 9am to 2pm
25th and 26th Closed
Sat 27th 10am to 4pm
Sun 28th Closed
Mon 29th 10am to 4pm
Tues 30th 10am to 4pm
Wed 31st 10am to 4pm
1st Jan Closed
Fri 2nd Jan 9am to 5pm

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Nicole returns to her roots for book signing

Nicole Cooke with Stuart Thom.

A building certified for worship named Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church and community Hall, Aberystwyth Crescent, Barry, in the registration district of Vale of Glamorgan in the Unitary Authority of the Vale of Glamorgan, was on 11th November 2014 registered for solemnizing marriages therein, pursuant of Section 41 of the marriage Act 1949 (as amended by Section 1 (1) of the marriage Acts Amendment Act 1958, In lieu of Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church of Wales, Junction of St Pauls Avenue and Trinity Street, Barry now disused and the registration cancelled thereof.

by PHILIP IRWIN

A STREAM of cycling fans visited the Bridgend Cycle Centre last Saturday to meet Nicole Cooke and take home a signed copy of her book, *The Breakaway* – a no-holds-barred account of her cycling career.

It was an appropriate location, as Nicole was a regular at the shop in her teens, popping in for repairs after attending Brynteg Comprehensive, as she was cycling to school and back from her home in Wick.

The book, published by Simon & Schuster earlier this year in August, has attracted admiring reviews, and was long listed for the prestigious title of Sports Book of the Year.

Richard Williams, senior sportswriter for the Guardian, had this to say about *The Breakaway*: "Her book is a compelling and salutary account of the price she paid for the victories from which many others will benefit."

Many of those victories were on her bike, and people in the Vale and Bridgend county boroughs do not realise how stunning those victories were. She gave notice at the age of 13, winning the under-16 world championship – and that winning jersey is framed and hangs in the Cycle Centre to this day.

Other victories are too numerous to list, but right at the top are the women's Tour de France, and the road race at the Beijing Olympics. Nicole told The GEM that she is still the only British cyclist of either gender to take the Olympic road race.

However, Richard Williams' quote refers to another set of battles that she fought – against a male-dominated British cycling establishment that she was never able to work with.

Speaking in Bridgend, she said: "I think that women cyclists get a better deal now when they concentrate on the track, but it will still be a struggle for anyone who wants to concentrate on road racing, as I did."

A further fight was on the issue of drugs in cycling – another issue where Nicole brooks no compromise. She wants all drugs cheats thrown out.

Nicole's success was down to talent, of course, but allied to that was a ferocious work ethic. Despite her cycling success as a teenager, she still left Brynteg Comprehensive with excellent A-Level grades.

When she retired at the age of 29, she tackled a dual challenge. She wrote this book and at the same time studied for an MBA at Cardiff University. She completed both in one year, and kept up with her cycling by riding from Wick to Cardiff every day!

Stuart Thom now owns the Cycle Centre, but when Nicole was in her teens, he was an employee there. He told The GEM: "Nicole was so keen on cycling. She just wanted to get on a bike. She was never interested in finding a bike that was faster than another – she always seemed to feel that she could go quicker than any other cyclist on her own efforts."

The Breakaway *is published by Simon & Schuster.*

Local association commemorates 1914 Christmas truce

THE South Wales Branch of the Western Front Association recently held a fundraising dinner to commemorate the Christmas Truce of 1914.

The event was attended by Vale AM Jane Hutt and regional AM Andrew RT Davies. With them in the photograph is David Hughes, chairman of the South Wales Branch of the South Wales Western Front Association. PD

A building certified for worship named Spiritualist Church, Kenilworth Road, Cadoxton, Barry, in the registration district of Vale of Glamorgan in the Unitary Authority of the Vale of Glamorgan was on 30th October 2014 registered for solemnizing marriages therein, pursuant of Section 41 of the Marriage Act 1949 (as amended by Section 1 (1) of the Marriage Acts Amendment Act 1958) and section 43A of the marriage Act 1949.

What's in your bin?

Tel: 01446 700111 Email: visible@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

How to REDUCE, REUSE and RECYCLE your waste this Christmas

VALE of GLAMORGAN
BRO MORGANNWG

- The Vale's recycling kerbside collection service can take your food waste, from your turkey carcass to your veg peelings, it can all be turned to compost at a facility local to the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Your Christmas wrapping paper can be recycled in your blue bag or green box, all we ask is that you remove any traces of sticky tape. We cannot recycle any glittery/shiny metallic paper.
- Christmas cards can be placed in your blue bag or green box. Please remove any sticky tape, bows, glitter or tinsel.
- Our partners at Waste Awareness Wales have some top tips on how to reduce your waste this Christmas and some great recipes for the christmas dinner left overs - www.wasteawarenesswales.org.uk/christmas

Christmas Tree Recycling Collection in January

Christmas Trees will be collected from the kerb side on householders' weekly recycling collection day from **Monday 12 January to Friday 16 January.** Only real trees will be collected, please strip off all decorations and put out for collection by 7.00am.

Online Calendars

From **December 2014** paper recycling and waste calendars will be replaced by online e-calendars via the Council's website. Residents will be able to enter their postcode online to view the 12 month calendar for their area. For those who do not have access to the internet black and white paper copies of the calendar can be sent out on request by calling C1V on 01446 700111.

Christmas Collection days: if your normal day is Thursday or Friday please see new dates

Normal Day:	Will now be:
Thursday 25 December 2014	Saturday 27 December 2014
Friday 26 December 2014	Sunday 28 December 2014
Thursday 1 January 2015	Friday 2 January 2015
Friday 2 January 2015	Saturday 3 January 2015

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Out and About with The GEM

Battle of Five Armies brings The Hobbit trilogy to an epic, if flawed, conclusion…

IT scarcely seems like it was 13 years ago that Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy opened up with *The Fellowship of the Ring*. Fast forward to 2014, and Jackson is now closing out his second Rings trilogy, ending *The Hobbit* with the epic-sounding *The Battle of the Five Armies*.

Picking up where last year's *The Desolation of Smaug* ended (with the titular fire breather heading to Laketown to reign fire and destruction upon its residents), we see Bilbo (Martin Freeman) and the band of elves he is working with, led by Thorin (Richard Armitage) forced to engage in a war against an array of combatants all intent on claiming their share of the gold from Smaug's recently vacated mountain (not a lot then); while Gandalf (Ian McKellen), last seen imprisoned, must get free to help his friends in their hour of need...

When Peter Jackson wrapped up *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy with *The Return of the King*, it capped a truly mesmerising and incredible series of films, the likes of which we hadn't seen realised on the big screen before.

Now, as Jackson closes *The Hobbit* trilogy, it's in a world that has seen more than its fair share of fantasy both fair and foul; that these films have lacked the bite of yesteryear's successes is as much down to that as the fact that the Hobbit films may have been epic in scale and scope, but have been lacking in real drama and urgency.

It's the same story this time around, as *The Battle of the Five Armies* may be technically accomplished, delivering the big action moments you expect, but sadly fails to push things on that extra gear, particularly on an emotional level.

Jackson and company's decision (for profit or 'artistic merit') of taking the slim pickings of the source material and spreading them over three films, and eight hours, starts to come undone here. The narrative feels padded out in certain areas with some story strands feeling shoehorned in.

One particular nod to Legolas about a ranger he should keep an eye on is particularly toe-curling) or just left dangling, inexcusable in a film with a 160 minute running time.

The film does parlay some modern-day concerns via the medium of Middle Earth. You have the innocents of Laketown reduced to refugees after their town has been (fire) bombed by a (scaly) despot, the nature of greed and avarice fuelling conflict rather than out-and-out hatred, which are nicely handled and do give the script a little more steel in places.

Jackson's ability as a director is

by GARETH JAMIESON
Follow Screen Talk on Twitter – @GEMScreenTalk

unquestionable, yet here there is a feeling of throwing everything to the wall and delivering a finale that comes laden with bucket loads of bombast; yet while Jackson is at his best breaking the rules, the action here plays out pretty much as you'd expect. It may be churlish when the film (some slightly poor CGI aside) doesn't scrimp on these epic moments, but you can't help but feel they are executed with a sigh rather than a scream. The Jackson of Pelennor Fields or Helm's Deep was pushing the envelope, but the titular battle here lacks the same hunger.

What Jackson does do well is manage to maintain the narrative thrust throughout the battle; as action moves from character to character, you do find yourself swept along for the ride as the emotional tension amplifies.

It is here that Jackson is at his best, the style and drama of the closing set-pieces feeling a world away from the general (and generic) battle going on elsewhere.

On the acting side there are highs and lows; Martin Freeman as he has been throughout is a tremendous presence, the actor a fine fit for Bilbo's transformation from petty burglar to hardened war veteran.

Richard Armitage offers a Shakespearean turn as Thorin's intentions go from noble to greedy. Billy Connolly's small turn as Thorin's grumpier cousin is a highlight, Orlando Bloom's Legolas does a neat line in crazy stunts; but both Evangeline Lily and Aidan Turner are undone by their romantic subplot that just doesn't convince.

It's a shame that this finale ends with arguably a whimper rather than a bang, especially as Jackson's return to the director's chair made *The Hobbit* trilogy such a tantalising proposition; however these films have lived in the shadow of the … *Rings* trilogy, despite the best efforts of both Jackson and his cast, and sadly, for the closing chapter, *The Battle of the Five Armies* is less Middle Earth and more Middling Earth.

VERDICT – An epic but disappointing closer for *The Hobbit* trilogy, *The Battle of the Five Armies* doesn't lack spectacle but is lacking in an engaging narrative. The performances pass muster, and Jackson in incapable of making a film unwatchable, but it doesn't coalesce into a satisfying piece of work overall. Enjoyable.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED: *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy (2001-2003), *The Hobbit*: *An Unexpected Journey* (2012).

Screen Talk would like to wish all readers a merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

Ty Hafan lottery draw winners

THE following are winning numbers in the Ty Hafan Crackerjackpot lottery draw number D857:

- **£7,000 rollover: 145836.**
- **£2,000: 474939**.
- **£10:** 515729, 170634, 598313, 247207, 258008, 154098, 477870, 437422, 851818, 286141, 643521, 217521, 927315, 855547, 740966, 913353, 555822, 454939, 567782, 549970.
- **£5:** 878680, 866836, 947469, 258650, 481162, 184765, 537321, 178096, 571511, 802482, 833254, 708044, 477765, 576604, 119481, 414157, 844776, 356439, 137992, 418326, 389657, 903157, 882497, 651851, 675326, 314605, 487524, 391130, 642259, 152497, 767883, 441366, 448207, 209804, 144445, 348702, 387737, 542291, 395419, 577571, 251450, 787100, 974740, 478053, 321917, 844882, 325448, 328532, 980400, 766292, 612552, 250262, 784605, 511960, 1418, 1243, 2043, 1414, 1986, 1005.

The GEM cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions contained in the above.

For lottery information please telephone 029 2053 2300.

YOUR FARMERS' MARKET NEEDS YOU

WITHOUT YOUR SUPPORT THE FARMERS MARKET WILL NOT SURVIVE

Christmas Markets
Saturday 20th December
9-12.30pm Westbourne School, Penarth
Tuesday 23rd December
Arthur John's Car Park,
Cowbridge, 9-12.30pm

DANCE, DANCE!

Strictly Come Dancing with Steve and Lynne (undefeated Welsh Open Latin American Champions and Wales's representatives in Belgium, New Zealand, Italy and Spain), and have a ball!

Steve and Lynne have been teaching in Cardiff, Penarth and Barry for 11 years now and are loving every minute! They are I.D.T.A. professionally qualified teachers and their classes are great fun, very vibrant, and as well as burning up loads of calories, losing weight and getting fit, everyone learns a new skill.

Come along and give it a go – bring your friends as well; our classes are tailor-made for beginners (and for people with two left feet!) and we have pupils of all ages. All former pupils are most welcome, and there's no need to book. Just pay as you go, with nothing to pay in advance and no registration fee.

You can book your place via our website salsachacha.com, or, you can just come along on the night.

Check the advertisement below for our new classes starting in January and we hope to see you there!

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HIGHLIGHT PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE, BARRY, (behind Tesco's), every THURSDAY, starting JANUARY 8th, 2015 8.30-9.30pm (intermediate 7.30-8.30pm)
LOWER PENARTH COMMUNITY CENTRE, Brockhill Way, PENARTH (Behind Spar Shop) every MONDAY starting JANUARY 5th 2015, 8-9 pm
Check Web for more info and to book your place:-
Learn to Salsa, Jive, Tango, Waltz, Cha-cha, Samba, Quickstep, Paso Doble, Merengue, Rumba, Foxtrot!!
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GREAT FUN & EXERCISE - GET FIT - FAST!!!

WHAT'S ON IN YOUR AREA

Festive partners

BARRY Communities First, in partnership with Parkside Christian Centre, invites local residents to a 'fun-filled Christmas event' tomorrow (Friday, December 19) 4.30pm – 6.30pm at Parkside Christian Centre, St Bride'sWay, Barry.

There will be a magician, Christmas arts and crafts, decoration making – and a visit from Father Christmas.

For more information, contact 01446 709432, or visit www.BarryCommunitiesFirst.org.

Lib-Dem surgery

ELUNED PARROTT, Welsh Liberal Democrat AM for South Wales Central, will be at Tesco Superstore, Terra Nova Way, Penarth CF64 1SA between 1pm and 2pm on December 19.

Residents with any issues of concern are encouraged to go along. No appointment necessary.

Carols and festive quiz

THERE will be a festive carol service at 6.30pm in St Hilary Church, on Sunday, December 21.

It will be followed by The Bush Sunday festive night quiz at 8pm.

Entry £1 per person – winning team takes all! Higher or lower restarts, first and third Sundays of the month.

All Saints' Christmas services

IT'S going to be a busy week in the parish of Penarth All Saints'. On December 21 at 10am, the Sunday School and youth group will present thair Nativity play. Any visiting children are welcome to come dressed as angels or shepherds and join the fun!

At 6pm on December 21, the traditional sevice of Nine Lessons and Carols will be followed by seasonal refreshments.

On Christmas Eve the popular crib service will be held at both 2pm and 4pm with Midnight Mass at 11.30pm.

Finally, on Christmas Day at All Saints' Church there will be Holy Eucharist at 8am and a family service at 10am, with Holy Eucharist at St Peter's Old Cogan at 11am.

Visit www.allsaintspenarth.org.uk for details.

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The winner of our competition was:
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Mrs Sims was nominated by her daughter-in-law to receive a prize of a free bedroom carpet.
CONGRATULATIONS!

£25 GEM FACEBOOK PRIZE
Our GEM Facebook winner for December 11, 2014 is:
Anthony Golebiowski
who correctly answered last week's question in The GEM.
Our lucky winning reader, chosen at random wins a £25 prize voucher to spend with any advertiser in last week's GEM.
The competition runs every week throughout 2014 with a potential prize fund of £1,150.
Congratulations, Anthony!
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Glamorgan GEM

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Happy Christmas from all at The GEM

Speakers regale Dinas Powys Probus club

THE December 9 meeting at Dinas Powys Probus club, was the annual occasion for 'An Assemblage of Members' Tales' – when members have the chance to address the club on absolutely nothing!

First up was Alan Smith, the club's favourite grump. He opened with an account of his hunt for the perfect combined potato/apple peeler. Good on spuds, no good on apples.

Eventually, he found a decrepit one in a junk shop and after considerable work with a file, he can now peel spuds and apples with a single implement!

Having further complained about twisting telephone cables, under-sized washing-up bowls, ironing boards and motorway signs, he finished by commentating on British Gas adverts which offer to carry out electrical repairs. Can they now put gas down wires he wonders? Warm applause from the floor.

Next up was Arthur Coxon (Royal Navy, retired) 'A Moment Alone With Royalty.' In 1968, he was seconded to become Squadron Commander of the Kenyan Navy. His first official function was to organise a trip in a patrol boat for Emperor Haile Selassie, the Lion of Ethiopia.

In passing, Arthur reminded members that rumour had it that the Emperor could trace his blood-line back to an illicit meeting between the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon.

The official party were all onboard at Mombasa when it was discovered the Emperor's dog, a chihuahua named Lula, had been left in the royal car, and as Haile would not go anywhere without Lula, everyone scrambled off the boat leaving Arthur alone with the Emperor.

He was directing him down to his cabin when he cracked his head on a low lintel. Arthur had visions of death by the burning spear, but fortunately he was not badly hurt.

The courtiers returned with the dog, which was promptly trodden on by a seaman with size 16 boots.

Arthur remembered him with affection and found him to be a pleasant man with no sense of arrogance. Having spent the war in Britain, he was killed in 1975 during a Marxist uprising and was buried under his palace toilet as a mark of contempt. Again, warm applause.

The third speaker was Geoff Thomas and once again content was of a different nature from what had gone before.

It concerned the decline in many aspects of our native tongue, and the efforts apparently being made by a totally fictitious pressure group named United Kingdom Restore English Party, named UKREEP for short.

This was a group seeking to restore the purity of the language of Shakespeare.

The basis of the presentation was to show how the language has declined by presenting examples of what has become universally known as business speak.

The vote of thanks was given by Ceri Jones, who congratulated all the speakers on behalf of the members.

Vale scientist Ben a Gold Award winner

A WELSH scientist from Wenvoe has been granted £5,000 by the Worshipful Livery Company of Wales, as the winner of their Gold Award 2014.

Ben Palmer (28) was chose for his contribution towards science and his research into the future of advanced optical materials such as X-Ray and photonic crystals.

The former student at Cardiff University obtained a first class honours degree in chemistry and a PhD in solid state chemistry. Following postdoctoral research at Swansea University, he became Dean of Faculty Fellow in the department of structural biology at the Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel, earlier this year.

Ben has already received numerous awards at both undergraduate and postgraduate level for academic excellence including the prestigious Koshland Prize from the Weizmann Institute of Science.

His research has been widely published in internationally leading science journals and he has also authored a book chapter in a major reference work in solid state chemistry.

The former Barry Comprehensive School pupil has already used some of the funding for travel costs to various academic institutions and conferences, including the University of Amsterdam and the International Gordon Conference on Biomineralization, New Hampshire, USA.

He will use the remainder of the money to enable him to attend and deliver a research lecture at the International Chemistry Conference of the Organic Solid State (ICCOSS) in Japan next summer.

Former Barry student, Ben Palmer at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel, where he is currently Dean of Faculty Fellow in the department of structural biology.

Ben said: "Winning this award will have a decisive impact on my prospects of establishing an independent academic career and will also serve to improve and deepen my development as a scientist.

"At this vital stage in my career, where I am taking my first steps towards independence, it is absolutely critical that I continue to publish high quality papers and effectively disseminate and raise the profile and impact of my research and the Gold Award will greatly assist me with this."

The aim of the Worshipful Livery Company of Wales' Gold Award is to support a young person who has demonstrated a major contribution to the arts, science or technology for the benefit of the people of Wales.

Wayne Warlow, Master of the Worshipful Livery Company of Wales said: "We are delighted that we have been able to assist someone of Ben's talent and dedication to science.

"For someone of his age, his accomplishments are fantastic and we are looking forward to seeing him achieve even more in the future."

SALLY PIONEERS INTERN SCHEME AT ASSEMBLY

A groundbreaking internship, created by patient and carers charity Crohn's and Colitis UK, placed Sally Coughtrey (from the Vale of Glamorgan) with Assembly Lib Dem Leader Kirsty Williams (Brecon and Radnorshire) on a 12 week paid placement.

A spokesperson explained: "The programme is designed to provide a unique opportunity for young people whose career prospects are often otherwise blunted by their Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) – more commonly known as Crohn's disease or Ulcerative Colitis.

"The aim of the scheme is to help young people with these chronic life-long conditions overcome employment barriers. To date, this new initiative has proved popular with both MPs and interns alike, providing the young people with significant career boosts."

Sally – who has Crohn's disease – commented: "I have already had the opportunity to work on a new Bill currently before the Assembly on public health. I have been critiquing the Bill and suggesting ways it can be amended. I have also been asked to write briefings for Assembly Members on a number of different areas, including culture and poverty and the Armed Forces."

A pilot programme was successfully launched earlier this year, placing two candidates with MPs at Westminster, with one candidate now employed as a Parliamentary Research Aid for her MP.

There are an estimated one in 250 people living in the UK with IBD and more than 50 per cent of new cases are diagnosed before their mid-twenties.

The conditions can cause severe stomach pains, urgency for the toilet, relentless diarrhoea, extreme fatigue, nausea and loss of appetite. Symptoms fluctuate and periods of remission can be followed by acute 'flare ups'.

Ed Wilson, deputy chief of staff to Kirsty Williams AM, said: "Sally hasn't been phased once with any of the varying tasks we've given her and she's coped brilliantly despite being thrown in at the deep end with hefty legislation to wade through!

"She's proven to be a great asset to our research team."

Commissioner's team meets Sheltered Housing Forum

THE Older People's Commissioner for Wales' team attended a Dinas Powys meeting of the Vale of Glamorgan Sheltered Housing Forum to outline projects under way, such as work to help to preserve vital community services that older people rely on and the recently published report, A Place to Call Home?

This sets out actions to improve the quality of life of older people living in care homes in Wales.

Around 20 people – representatives of sheltered complexes in Llantwit Major, Cowbridge, Barry, Dinas Powys and Penarth, meet every two months to discuss issues affecting some or all of the complexes with local authority staff.

Residents asked about the implications of a proposed merger between the Vale Council and Bridgend Council, considering that the Vale has retained its housing stock, while Bridgend's is now run by a social landlord.

The Older People's Commissioner's engagement co-ordinator, Kate Hughes, talks to the group at the meeting in Dinas Powys.

PACT meetings

GIBBONSDOWN PACT at Barry Rugby Club, Merthyr Dyfan Road, Barry, January 5 at 7pm.

CADOC PACT at Palmerston Community & Learning Centre on January 7 at 6pm.

COURT PACT at The Witchill Community hall, Dyfan Road on January 8 at 6pm.

CASTLELAND PACT The Civic Offices, Holton Road on January 19 at 7pm.

DINAS POWYS PACT at St Mary's Church Hall, Edith Road, Dinas Powys on January 5 at 7pm.

COFFEE & CHAT at The Green Dragon, Llancadle on January 8 at 11am.

COWBRIDGE PACT at Cowbridge Fire Station, Druids Green, on January 19 at 11am.

ST AUGUSTINE PACT at the hall in Belle Vue Park, off Albert Road, Penarth on January 21 at 7pm.

LLANTWIT PACT at Llantwit Leisure Centre on January 21 at 7pm.

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Glamorgan GEM
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Christmas is also a time for the whole community to share and extend greetings, as 2014 slips away into the history books and another year awaits its turn in the wings.

The GEM, too, would like to take the opportunity to add our voice to the messages on this page.

We heartily wish all of our readers and advertisers a very happy, peaceful Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

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Llantwit Major Town Council

Councillor Mick Mason, Town Mayor and all Town Councillors wish Llantwit Major residents and visitors a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous 2015

ANDREW RT DAVIES AM
WISHING YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!
SOUTH WALES CENTRAL REGION

Do you have an issue you would like to raise with Andrew? If so, please call him on 02920 898523 / 01446 775039.
You can also write to Andrew at the National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff Bay, CF99DNA or get in touch via the links below:
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Councillor Howard Hamilton
The Mayor of the Vale of Glamorgan Council extends Seasons Greetings to all residents of the Vale of Glamorgan.
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
Mae'r Cynghorydd Howard Hamilton
Faer Cyngor Bro Morgannwg, yn estyn Cyfarchion yr Wyl i holl drigolion y Fro.
Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda

VALE OF GLAMORGAN
Labour Party
Would like to wish the Community a Very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year!

Masonic lodges' epic trek for Noah's Ark!

LEFT: The members of local Masonic lodges of South Wales, led by Services Lodge of Penarth, set themselves a testing challenge to raise money for the Noah's Ark appeal – a walk all the way around Wales with members taking different legs of the journey.

Here, some of the Walk Around Wales team are shown as Paul Haley presents a cheque to the chairman of Noah's Ark, Mr Lyn Jones.

Everyone is wearing their presentation medals for completing the walk. The total is still going up and is now over £20,000.

What's on, and where in your area?

Local author on radio

LOCAL author and public speaker, Ron Powell, is to appear on the BBC Radio Wales book programme, Phil The Shelf, talking about his debut novel, *Wings Over Summer*, which follows the fortunes of a young Spitfire pilot from Barry during the Battle of Britain.

Two years ago, Ron, who lives at Nell's Point, sent the unpublished manuscript of *Wings Over Summer* to the Shelfstarters section of Phil The Shelf, and appeared on air to hear what presenter, Phil Rickman, and a literary agent thought of it.

"In the end, I decided to self-publish on Amazon, which I did with the help of Penarth-based author, K J Rabane."

Phil The Shelf is broadcast on BBC Radio Wales at 1.30pm on December 20, repeated at 6.05pm on December 22.

Debut gig

A NEW line-up of local musicians makes its debut at the Park Hotel, Barry, at 8.30pm on Saturday, December 20.

Consisting of Kirby Stevens (drums), Andy Cleary (bass), Rob Weekley (keyboards), Pete Hughes (guitar) and fronted by Julie and Laura, the Groove Habit will include tracks from Stevie Wonder, Chic, Lionel Richie, Daft Punk and David Bowie.

Councillors' surgery

LABOUR Vale and town councillors for Buttrills and Court wards, Barry – Bronwen Brooks, Pamela Drake, Jeff Evans and Stuart Egan, will be holding an advice surgery on Saturday, December 20 from 10am – 11.30am in the meeting room of Barry Library, King's Square. *No appointment is necessary.*

Carols

FAMILIES and children will be welcomed to the 'Carols by Candlelight' on Christmas Eve at the church of Merthyr Dyfan, in Merthry Dyfan Lane, Colcot, Barry at 2.30pm.

The service will be taken by Father Robert Parish, and the organist will be Barry-born Father Brian Taylor. Admission is free.

On Christmas morning carols and sung Mass are at Merthyr Dyfan Church at 8.45am.

Breast screening

THE Breast Test Wales free mobile screening unit will be situated at Sainsbury's Sarn from January 6 to April 21.

Women aged between 50 and 70 will receive postal invitations to attend for screening, if they are registered with the following surgeries: New Street surgery, Tynycoed surgery, Ogmore Vale surgery, Nantymoel surgery and Cwm Garw practice.

Women aged over 70 will not automatically be invited for breast screening, but can request an appointment by telephoning Breast Test Wales on 029 2039 7222.

Anyone concerned about a breast change should visit their GP without delay. Telephone Breast Test Wales on 02920 397222.

Murch Junior School Choir – *TAKE A BOW!*

YOU may have been to many Christmas carol concerts but you haven't heard the real thing until you've heard the Murch Junior School Choir!

On Thursday, December 11, 40 children from Murch Juniors visited Bethel House in Dinas Powys and gave the residents the treat of the year.

Talk about good behaviour – they had it; talk about disciplined singing – they did it. They were superb and a great credit to their teacher, Mrs Emma Messer, who had taught them how to sing so joyfully, both in unison and in parts, while maintaining excellent diction. Oh, and we must not omit to mention the special guest – a diminutive Santa who handed out sweets all round.

Who said the kids of today don't care? When they were about to leave the school earlier, the heavens opened and did it rain!

The children were given the option to call it off, but no – they were determined not to let us residents down, so they tramped the half mile through the rain to enthral us.

However, there was one disappointment... the concert lasted for only 40 minutes. We would have liked it to last at least twice as long!

Well done, Murch Juniors, from all the residents.

David Chapman, Dinas Powys

Seaview Lads all set for Christmas!

ON Sunday we held the first leg of our Christmas competition and also fished for the Wyndham page Trophy.

Thirty anglers made the early start, in spite of a forecast of high winds and rain. The winds were as strong as forecast and resulted in many fishing marks being difficult to fish and anglers had to choose spots where a days fishing was possible over spots that might be the number one choice for catching fish.

Thankfully, the rain stayed away for most of the day but so did the fish. Half the anglers didn't land anything in size and many didn't even have a single bite!

Top place on the day went to Kevin Salah, with an eel of just over 5lb, while a codling helped ICA into second place, with Royston Harding and Jodie Velda sharing third place

Fishing surely must improve for next week's second leg! Let's see a big turn out on Sunday as it is the last competition before Christmas - unless we can squeeze in a night one on December 24!

JC

Vale People First's winning festive tree!

VALE People First won the group prize at the St Mary's Church Christmas Tree Festival and were congratulated by Jane Hutt AM, Deputy Mayor of Barry Town Council, Coun Rob Curtis, and Father Ben Andrews. They are pictured (above) with Christopher Power, a member of Vale People First, and the winning tree.

Colcot Primary and St Helens Junior Schools jointly won the Schools prize.

Public Notice

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL
CYNGOR BRO MORGANNWG

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990
Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012

Development that may affect a Conservation Area/ Datblygu a allai effeithio ar Ardal Gadwraeth

Application No:/ Rhif y cais:	2014/01392/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig:	Extension and alterations of existing property to form 9 self-contained residential apartments
Location:/Lleoliad:	2, Stanwell Road, Penarth
Conservation Area:/ Ardal Gadwraeth	Penarth

Listed Building Consent/ Caniatâd Adeilad Rhestredig

Application No:/ Rhif y cais:	2014/01416/LBC
Proposal:/Cynnig:	Provide a new porch to the front entrance to dwelling
Location:/Lleoliad:	The Pheasant House, Nash Manor, Cowbridge
Listed Building:/ Adeilad Rhestredig	Grade II

Details may be inspected for 21 days at the address given below, or via **http://vogonline.planning-register.co.uk/**

Gall manylion eu harchwilio am 21 diwrnod yn y cyfeiriad a roddir isod, neu drwy **http://vogonline.planning-register.co.uk/**

Dated / Dyddiedig: 18 December, 2014

M. Goldsworthy
Operational Manager Development & Building Control,
Vale of Glamorgan Council, Dock Office, Barry. CF63 4RT

'Cardiff merger would be retrograde step'

VIEW FROM THE VALE

by Coun **NEIL MOORE** Leader of the Vale of Glamorgan Council

AS we come to the end of the year, it would be good to review what has happened in the Vale of Glamorgan and during our term in office. Therefore, in my next column I intend to review what has happened in the council.

I will wait until then, as much still needs to be decided before December 31, particularly in relation to the council decision over the possible way forward on the reform of local government, and whether or not the Expression of Interest in merging with Bridgend Council will be agreed by the full council meeting on December 15.

I know that when the original proposals were considered, I was very vocal about the recommendations of the Williams Commission to merge the Vale Council with Cardiff Council. I did so because I believed the recommendations were flawed, and felt that at that time I had no option but to take a stance and inform the Welsh Government that I would not support such a merger.

My stance has not changed and it will not change in the future. I believe that a merger with Cardiff would be a retrograde step and the people of the Vale would be seriously disadvantaged.

We would, in my opinion, be subsumed. All the good work that we have achieved will be lost and we would not be an equal partner in the relationship. We would lose out on service delivery, as we did in the past, during the existence of South Glamorgan County Council, when there was a serious underinvestment in areas such as education.

What people forget is that South Glamorgan Council only dealt with the strategic services such as social services, highways, education, trading standards, strategic planning and strategic economic development.

What is also sometimes forgotten is that we also had a Vale of Glamorgan Borough Council, which dealt with the services closest to the people such as housing, leisure, environmental health, licensing, waste management (street cleaning and refuse collection etc).

The newly merged authority would see all of these services transferred and I believe these services would not be as effective or efficient and meet the local needs as they are now and that we would become the poor relation to Cardiff.

We waited for a reaction from Welsh Government, which took a year or so and as a result, as with everything in life, things move on. In this case, the Welsh Government decided to do two things. Initially, they began a consultation process asking councils for an official response to the Williams Commission recommendations. Confusingly, during that initial consultation period the Welsh Government asked for councils to consider whether they would agree to any voluntary merger proposals.

They could either conform to the Williams Commission proposals or consider other alternative and different merger proposals (possibly because of the negative reaction to those recommendations).

Regrettably, and again confusing matters even further, after issuing the voluntary merger proposals, the Welsh Government Minister responsible for local government made his intentions abundantly clear and confirmed that there would definitely be local government reorganisation – and it would happen "with or without" our support.

He also confirmed that stand-alone councils such as the Vale were not an option. The Vale Council initially responded to the first consultation document by confirming that they did not want to merge with Cardiff under any circumstances and wanted to stand alone.

However, subsequently, and bearing in mind the Minister's announcement, the Vale Council agreed to explore if we could merge with another council of a similar size and with a similar ethos that could provide services to the people in a similar manner to the Vale. We have, therefore, done exactly that and I presented a report to the council's cabinet to submit an 'Expression of Interest' in merging voluntarily with Bridgend Council, who also agreed to this voluntary proposal.

This proposal will be considered by the Vale's full council on December 15 and subsequently by Welsh Government in the New Year. The Welsh Government were to respond on January 5, but that date has now been postponed until some unknown date in the future.

I sincerely hope that the Minister will take seriously both the proposals by both of our councils.

I am also aware that some people have asked why we have not engaged with the people of the Vale, but it is important to note that so far, all that has been agreed by the Vale of Glamorgan cabinet is the submission of the 'Expression of Interest'.

We are at the start of what could be a lengthy process and which will ultimately rest with a decision taken by the Welsh Government.

I will, however, ensure that whatever happens or is decided by Welsh Government, everyone will be kept informed of the outcomes and the processes that need to take place, but that may take some years to come to fruition.

REMEMBERING THEM

I WOULD now like to turn to other matters. Last month I referred to the Armistice Day commemoration on November 11, but since then both myself and the Mayor were asked to represent the council at a World War One commemoration at our twin town, Mouscron in Belgium, along with the other twinning towns of Fecamp in France and Rheinfelden in Germany.

The Belgian people are very respectful of the efforts of the Allied forces during that time, as well as respecting the soldiers of the German army, both of whom served their countries during these futile conflicts.

Mouscron is in the area of Wallonia and within the area known for trench warfare in Flanders. During the visit we were very proud to lay wreaths at the Berkshire Regimental Memorial in 'Plugstreet', so called because the British troops could not say 'Ploegsteert'.

It was an honour to be asked to represent the Vale of Glamorgan at these commemoration events. At the site, there is also a very impressive memorial along with an interactive museum, which was extremely informative.

We also had the opportunity to visit several of the very many cemeteries and memorials in the area, which included the site of the Christmas Day football match between the British and German troops, during the truce on that day.

It was also very poignant that the visit coincided with the opening of a new memorial to this event.

What impressed most was the way in which the locals volunteered to look after the sites and give the presentations at the memorials and carry out the weekly ceremonies, recognising those who lost their lives representing their country, no matter on which side they fought.

I would recommend a visit either in person or via the Plugstreet website if you want to know more.

On a previous occasion I was also very pleased to be invited to St James' Palace in London representing the council at the ceremony for the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Awards being presented to young people from across Britain, but also to 12 very deserving young people from the Vale of Glamorgan.

Although I was not able to talk to each of them personally, due to the way in which the event was organised, I would like to send them my personal congratulations and wish them well for the future.

I was also pleased to represent the Vale as we have extremely good links with the Duke of Edinburgh Awards scheme and it was announced that St Donat's College and Beechwood College are now accredited with the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, whose representatives were also present on the day.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

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FONMON APIARY NEWS by HAROLD WILLIAMS

Get 'hands-on' experience of beekeeping this winter

WINTER temperatures are certainly controlling the activities of the Honeybee colonies now; anything less than 10ºC, and there is a distinct lack of external sightings of colony occupants.

Honeybees do not hibernate; with the onset of external wintertime temperatures they form a cluster within the hive and there they achieve a temperature that allows them to move to their food stores and of course remain alive until better times come along i.e. spring.

It is imperative that the hive containing the colony is weatherproof; if this is not the case the bees will struggle to control things and may well not survive at all.

All of the colonies will now be left undisturbed until March or April; by this time the days will be lengthening and spring will hopefully bring higher temperatures and our bee year will begin afresh.

However, although the bees have stopped working the beekeeper must set to and see to it that equipment now not in use is stored correctly, and by that I mean that all wax combs are secured in vermin proof containers; if not you will surely get a visitation from mice and they will render said combs unusable.

Prior to storing your combs, it is also necessary to examine them carefully because we have two little creatures that will be very happy for their larvae to utilise your combs as a winter home even though you have prevented the mice from getting at them.

What are these creatures? They are two species of wax moth and their aim is to lay eggs in any cracks or crevices in the hive or in your honey frames.

The bees can usually cope within the hive but it requires the beekeeper to treat any frames scheduled for winter storage with acetic acid, and this will check the development of any eggs or larvae before they can render the combs unusable.

This is also the time to clean up the queen excluders, smoker, hive tools and, of course, all of the super boxes that will be used to contain your honey frames come next year. Having everything clean and ready for immediate use next year is what we are aiming for. Sadly, this is not the case in many instances.

This year has seen the pollinating insects responding to the favourable conditions - one insect that has not appeared in its usual numbers has been the wasp! It has shown up but it has not been seen around the hives, as it normally would be.

The varroa mite is still with us and will be for the foreseeable future. As I have done in the past, I am still designated as a sentinel apiary beekeeper.

This means that I have to look out for any of the coming threats to our colonies from alien species. Regular inspections throughout the beekeeping year and reporting to the NBU my findings, or lack of them, will help in our efforts to assist the honeybees' survival.

A new training apiary within the grounds of Dyffryn Gardens has now been established. Come next spring, those who will be new to the craft of beekeeping can get hands-on experience, along with other aspects of beekeeping and hopefully become beekeepers in their own right.

A visit to Cardiff beekeepers' site on the web will furnish contacts for people who wish to enquire about courses for the coming year 2015.

I have a lot of equipment to clean and must push on if I am to be prepared myself for the coming 2015 season.

Pupils' tour de force on the Yellow Brick Road!

The cast of The Yellow Brick Road. *Photo by Scott Nelson*

ON December 10 and 11, the Barry Comprehensive School hall was transformed into the magical land of Oz for this year's Christmas pantomime *The Yellow Brick Road.*

The script (written by Mr Ian Piekielniak) was loosely based upon *The Wizard of Oz* and featured all of the original characters from the film, including Dorothy (Miss K Walters) Scarecrow (Harry Morgan Grant) Tin man (Joel DeGaetano) Lion (Tom Bowen and Jamie Brown) and the Wicked Witch (Mrs A Ellis), as well as some special appearances from Snow White (Mrs J Lander) and Batman (Daniel Broadbent).

The performance played to two sold out audiences with many commenting that "that was the best yet" and "It was funnier than the one in Cardiff"; and another stating "I saw *Wicked* in London last week and this (*The Yellow Brick Road*) was much better".

Once again, the drama department couldn't be more proud of all the performers on stage and the technical team behind it. Putting together a show like this in just two weeks requires dedication, commitment and exceptional teamwork, which everyone involved had in abundance!

The school pantomime has become an annual event over the last 10 years and is one that both staff and pupils look forward to.

On behalf of the cast and crew of The Yellow Brick Road, we would like to thank everyone who came along and lent their support during the week. We would also like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a happy New Year! **AC**

Star lights up the Ty Hafan Christmas panto

WELSH actor Craig Roberts has joined in the fun of Tŷ Hafan's Christmas pantomime.

Micheal Gooding with son David, Craig Roberts and Santa.

The film and TV star, best known among those at Tŷ Hafan for his roles in hit children's show *The Story Of Tracy Beaker* and CBBC's *Young Dracula*, dropped by to watch its Disney-themed panto as part of the hospice's Precious Moments campaign.

He is calling on the public to contribute towards creating more special moments for children, especially during the festive season, after taking time out from his busy schedule to support Tŷ Hafan this Christmas.

Craig said: "The work that Tŷ Hafan does is incredibly important. The staff and volunteers working at the children's hospice do the most remarkable job to ensure that children and their families can celebrate Christmas with the care and the support that they need, and I am honoured to be here."

Craig recently finished work on his directorial debut *Just Jim* starring Emile Hirsch, which will be released in September.

Meanwhile Tŷ Hafan wants people to talk about their own 'precious moments' through social media in the run up to the Christmas season and help continue providing support for life-limited children across South Wales in 2015.

Jenna Lewis, head of individual giving at Tŷ Hafan, said: "Life is all about those precious moments so we want people to think about their own most special memories and share them online. The support that Tŷ Hafan provides extends further than our hospice and is delivered in the family home, at hospital and in schools across Wales. Our hope is that the public will support our Christmas appeal so we can continue providing families with precious moments which they can cherish forever."

It costs £3.7m a year to provide the charity's state-of-the-art facilities at Sully and its support services to families out in the community.

An individual donation of £23 would provide an hour of care and support to a child and his or her family, but the charity is urging people to donate what they feel able to, as the whole operation depends on the generosity of the public.

To make a donation please visit www.tyhafan.org/precious. Share your own precious moments by sending a tweet to @tyhafan with the #preciousmoments hashtag.

Bus damaged in incident

A bus was damaged in a collision at Barry Island on Saturday morning. If anyone has any information on the incident, they are asked to contact the local police on 101.
PHOTOGRAPH by DAVID ALEXANDER

SHEDDING A FEW POUNDS IN CHRISTMAS PUDDING RACE BEFORE THE BIG DAY

THE Christmas Pudding Run at Merthyr Mawr on Sunday, December 14, drew a large amount of entries.

It was a multi-terrain event – sand, track, road and field – that tested competitors to the limit.

As you can see from Glyn Evans' record of the day, there was an off-terrain aspect too, splashing through a freezing stream!

PHOTOGRAPHS by GLYN EVANS

OTHER PICTURES ARE AVAILABLE FROM THIS EVENT.

Pictures can be purchased by contacting:

E-Mail: ffotoimage@tiscali.co.uk
Telephone 07791 228684
www.ffotoimage.co.uk

Presentation night at Wenvoe golf club

PRESENTATION night is always a special occasion at Wenvoe Castle Golf Club with the winners of the various club competitions receiving their well earned trophies.

There was a glittering display of silverware and vice president Colin Champ showed considerable stamina in announcing the winners and in total 37 trophies presented for the various men's, ladies and mixed competitions.

Some competitions were settled on the day but several knock out competitions lasted over many rounds throughout the summer months and the winners had certainly earned their rewards particularly their names engraved in gold leaf on the honours boards.

The men's club championship had been a stunning contest between the veteran Keith Simpson and Leigh Ivory during which there were no less than 15 birdies shared by both players as the game ebbed and flowed to a thrilling finish.

Over the first 18 holes Keith built up a commanding lead of four holes which increased to six as they began the final stretch. In a tremendous effort to get back in contention Leigh fired a barrage of birdies to get back to just a one hole deficit as the players stood on the 16th tee.

Drawing on his vast experience at the highest level Keith then responded with birdies on the next two holes to close out the match 3&1 on the 17th hole and clinch the title for the seventh time. Leigh was denied his first championship title but played his part in a high quality match and will be long remembered by all the spectators particularly club captain Ken Howells who congratulated both players on match played in a truly sporting manner and a credit to both players.

On receiving the trophy Keith also took the opportunity to thank the head green keeper and the green staff for presenting the course in superb condition not only on the day but throughout the year.

In the ladies championship it was to be a new name on the cup with Barbara Beedham and Lynda Campbell challenging for the title for the first time.

It was another match over 36 holes in which the tested the quality and stamina of both players. Barbara gained the upper hand over the first 18 holes and at the half way stage led by four holes. A determined fight back by Lynda closed the gap to just two holes but the match was probably won and lost on the ninth and 10th holes where Barbara won both and extended her lead back to four holes.

Despite a valiant attempt by a very competitive opponent to close the gap the match eventually finished on the 13th hole and where Barbara deservedly clinched the title.

Wenvoe Castle Golf Club certainly has a lot to offer the competitive golfer of all standards and new members are very welcome. There is plenty of opportunity to play social golf and off the course a busy programme is full of events to overcome the disappointment of wayward drives and missed putts.

Why not consider joining as a playing or social member and contact the club secretary Nicola Sims on 02920 594371 who will be delighted to give you the details on membership or use of the facilities.

2014 COMPETITION WINNERS

Club championships: club champion Keith Simpson, Runner up Leigh Ivory. Lady champion Barbara Beedham, Lynda Campbell.

Ladies competitions: M Moss Memorial Shield - Barbara Beedham; Thompson Salver - Marilyn Davies; Committee Cup - Sue Dayananada; Seniors Cup - Wendy Motton; Handicap Oscar - Sandra Hathway; Coronation Cup - Delyth Thomas; Laurie Jones Shield - Helen Hughes & Sam Case; Blod Lewis Cup - Debbie Williams; Whitecup Foursomes - Helen Hughes & Sheila Morrow;

Mary Fellows Bowl - Lynda Campbell; Bronze Division Champion - Wendy Motton.

Gentlemen's competitions: Committee Cup - Patrick Regan & Neil Kelly; LG Fellows Tankard - Paul Kennedy; Palmer Cup - Dave Hutchings; Autumn Tankards - Robin White & Dominic Sullivan; Dai David Putter - Rhys Bagnall; Viv Jones Tankard - Mark Gallivan; Celnik Cup - Rhys Ivory; Captains Shield - Leigh Ivory; Coronation Cup - Daniel Williams; Renwick Seniors Trophy - Mark Collier; Hales Cup - Leigh Ivory. **BJ**

Roller skating club ends the year on a high

GLAMORGAN Artistic Roller Skating Club attended the last competition of the year on Sunday, December 9, in Andover.

The club had fantastic results with Bethan Daly and Michael Vaughan winning first place and second place in the couples and duo dance events, Medi Western and Ewan Maxwell both coming second in the interclub formation trios and Donna Daly gaining third place in the over-30s solo event.

All of the skaters placed well within their events and congratulations go to Lara Goodwin, Kaitlin Daly, Phoebe Escott, Maya Archampong, Erin Maxwell, Amy Goodwin, Charleigh Griffiths and Elizabeth Vaughan for the fantastic efforts they put in.

The competition team will now be training hard for their next competition which will be held in Herne Bay in January.

The club has been running for five years now and has gone from strength to strength. It teaches artistic roller skating to all ages - anybody interested in joining the club should contact the club secretary Anne Marie Escott on 07517854453. **AG**

Drama as the Saints hold on

BARRY Saints walked away with three points after a tough 2-1 win over G.C.A.W (Greek Cypriot Association of Wales).

The Saints were hindered by injuries and unavailability and were only able to call upon 12 players for a difficult fixture against the third placed team in the league. The Greeks were looking for a scalp against the unbeaten Saints but came up short.

They took the lead when a freekick on the edge of the box was powerfully converted past stand-in keeper Gareth Hegarty. Saints were creating chances but showed very little conviction rarely testing the opposition keeper.

Doubt was creeping in and the Saints who could get very little going on a small narrow pitch were drawn into a battle. At halftime some harsh but honest words amongst the players seemed to do the trick and Saints came out and began to play some football.

Instantly they were level; after some great work David Evans found space to finish his one on one opportunity low into the bottom corner. The Greeks continued to push forward and Hegarty was called into action stopping a low effort which nearly fell to the opposition winger but full back David A Evans slid in to block.

Saints then grabbed the lead against the run of play. A long throw flicked on by Williams found Darren Townsend to volley home in to the bottom corner.

Saints had numerous chances to put the game beyond the hosts but with two minutes to go the final score could have been different. The Saints had possession in the the opposition's corner but after pushing to many men forward a long ball over the top found the Greek's pacey striker.

He squared the ball past the last man to find three unmarked players in the box. The midfielder went for glory and was brought down by Hegarty and a penalty was awarded, but no card given.

Up stepped their pacey striker, hitting a low powerful effort, only to be outfoxed by Hegarty with a smart save. The rebound popped up in the air which the penalty taker got to first but found his header loop over the bar.

With that the final whistle was blown, and Saints, playing nowhere near their best, still got the win and remain unbeaten going into the new year. **GL**

Vale six set to face England

SIX young footballers from the Vale will be lining up against England in 2015 – thanks to a joint initiative between the Welsh Football Trust and the Vale of Glamorgan sports development department.

Over two years ago plans were put in place for football sessions with coaches from Post 2 Post coaching and the Welsh Football Trust development officer to run for special educational needs schools and departments throughout the Vale in order to help feed the Welsh national learning disabilities squad.

Funding was gained through a partnership with the Vale of Glamorgan Council's sports development department, who also helped create links with the schools to set up the sessions.

These alerted coaches to several players throughout the Vale and now six players have represented their country at international level: Abdel Boulaiche, Coby Mardenborough, Ryan Garland, James Leake, Zach Cleary and Luke Swain all helped the Welsh National LD team in winning the 2014 Home Nations, where they were undefeated against the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

Later in the year, Wales drew 3-3 with a very experienced England side, after being in front for most of the match. All the players are looking forward to their future in football, with every one of the team looking to play at the highest level they can, including Ryan Garland who will be playing his football in Australia for the next year.

Simon Jones, Disability Sport Wales development officer for the Vale Council, said: "This is an excellent example of how partnership working can benefit local people who take part in sport.

"A lot of these players weren't known to either party before the project took place, now six of them have gone on to represent their county which is a credit to the coaches and the players themselves."

Wales will be playing England in March with the aim to improve on the 3-3 draw earlier this year, as well as defending their Home Nations title in April.

Evan lands hat-trick

LLANCARFAN trainer Evan Williams had 12 runners at Ffos Las last Monday – and came away with three winners.

He took the first two races with Cape Caster and Clyne and the last race the National Hunt Flat Race with Nansaroy. Cape Caster won the Juvenile Hurdle at odds of evens and Clyne, a 14-1 chance, took the novices' hurdle beating the odds on favourite Globalisation.

Both winners were ridden by stable jockey Paul Moloney who was chalking up his 50th winner of the season.

Nansaroy, a 12-1 shot , ridden by Lewis Gordon, finished half-a-length ahead of his much fancied stablemate The Gibber who was ridden by Connor Ring.

Williams said: "Both riders, Lewis Gordon and Connor Ring, had ridden perfect races and had finished first and second without touching their mounts behind the saddle. I told them to go out there and ride their races and nothing else. You don't have to drum orders into good young riders."

Debbie Hamer, who hails from the Vale but who now trains in west Wales, saddled her Magical Man to win the Walters Land Novices' Handicap Chase.

A 16-1 outsider, Magical Man was ridden by James Davies son of former Welsh National Hunt jockey Hywel Davies.

BRIAN LEE

Who wants to build what in the Vale, and where?

Westside Homes Ltd – **Vacant land, The Limes, Cowbridge** – Erection of two blocks of apartments each containing six dwelling units.

Persimmon Homes East Wales, Barratt Homes and Taylor Wimpey – **Site known as Westpond, Barry Waterfront, Barry** – Construction of substation for Phase 1 of the Westpond Barry Redevelopment.

Mr and Mrs Tony Davies – **1 Pembroke Close, Dinas Powys** – Two storey side extension.

Mr Robbie Robson – **5 Trepit Road, Wick** – Amendment to approvals 2009/00686/FUL and 2010/00279/FUL – single storey garage constructed of timber.

Mr B Jones – **Hillside, Pendoylan** – Agricultural barn.

Connells – **52 High Street, Cowbridge** – Change of Use from A1 Shops to A2 Financial and Professional Services. New fascia advertisement sign and replacement of the existing shopfront to match the existing.

Dinas Powys Football Club – **The Murch Recreation Ground, off Sunnycroft Lane, Dinas Powys** – Siting of storage container to store football club equipment.

Mr Alfred Birner – **3 Maes Y Coed, Barry** – Division of a plot and the construction of two new two-bedroom apartments.

Mrs Karen Mallory – **74 Stanwell Road, Penarth** – Construction of driveway to the front of the property with access over the pavement to the highway.

Mr Dylan Bowen – ***6 Clive Place, Penarth*** – Demolition of existing front elevation and reinstatement of stone facade complete with bay window.

Mr Paul Evans – **Abbey Farm, Abbey Road, Ewenny** – Garage.

Mr Alexander Easton – **11 Highwalls Road, Dinas Powys** – Cut back hedges, demolish wall in part and excavate soil to provide a carport for two vehicles. Build a rendered blockwork retaining wall and build a carport with Dutch barn style roof and timber weatherboard elevations to the back and sides.

Mr Hayden Williams – **27 South Road, Sully, Penarth** – Proposed temporary building on land adjacent to 27 South Road, Sully.

Mr Anthony Hatwood, VoG Council – **Redlands House, Redlands Avenue, Penarth** – Refurbishment and cladding of front elevation, new canopy to front entrance, parking, spaces and soft and hard landscaping.

High Noon Stores Ltd – **Downs Filling Station, Stalling Down, Cowbridge** – Replacement shop fascias and freestanding totem pole signage.

Mr Kevin Holmes – **Island View Residential Home, 8 – 12 Friars Road, Barry** – Single storey rear extension (sun lounge).

HSBC Bank plc – **HSBC, 61 High Street, Cowbridge** – Removal and replacement of one external ATM.

Mr and Mrs M Camillerri – **Ffream Annwfn, Sully Road, Penarth** – Conversion of rural building to residential dwelling.

Mr Rob Ashman – **4 Voss Park Close, Llantwit Major** – Existing garage to be changed to habitable space, new window in place of garage door. New extension to side elevation to match existing front projection, to become new garage/store existing garage door utilised here. Existing stone cladding removed to front projection and rendered.

Mrs S Morel – **The Stables, adjacent The Old Rectory, St Brides Super Ely** – Alterations to previously approved scheme for a replacement dwelling (ref 2014/00705/FUL).

Mr B Watkins – **Westgate Lodge, 1 Llantwit Major Road, Cowbridge** – Proposed utility room extension to ground floor including disabled shower room.

Rev Roger Grafton – **13/13A Arcot Street, Penarth** – Change of Use of ground floor to offices/counselling rooms and foodbank.

Mr Iain MacKinnon – **2 Rookery Close, Sully, Penarth** – Proposed extension to the rear of the garage.

Mrs Judith Jones – **24 Cae Gwyn, Penarth** – Single storey rear extension.

Mr Alan Shardelow – **13 Westward Rise, Barry** – Two storey extension to rear ground floor kitchen/lounge, first floor bedroom with en-suite. Porch extension to include cloakroom and WC.

Mr Geraint Thomas – **6 Plover Way, Penarth** – Single storey front, side and rear extensions.

Mr Chris Dando – **74 Murch Road, Dinas Powys** – Demolition of existing dwelling and construction of two new dwellings with revised vehicular access.

Mr A Lewis – **59 North Walk, Barry** – Proposed double storey side extension.

The Governors of Stanwell School – **Stanwell School, Salisbury Avenue, Penarth** – Engineering works comprising the construction of 41 new parking spaces within the existing school grounds.

Mr A Dalton – **Land adjacent to Vale Forge, North Road, Cowbridge** – To remove Conditions 2, 3 and 4 being the conditions relating to Code of Sustainable Homes.

Mr Roger Thomas – **Land adjacent to Millands Park, Llanmaes, Llantwit Major** – Provision of five licensed affordable mobile homes, including parking and landscaping.

Mrs Mary Tornabene – 20 Marine Drive, Barry – Proposed window alterations to front and side elevations.

Mr Paul Church – **109 Glebe Street, Penarth** – Remove existing glazed aluminium shop front and replace with traditional wooden shop front with glazing.

Q-Park Ltd – **Site adjacent to A4226/Tredogan Road and Penmark roundabout, Cardiff International Airport, Rhoose** – Vary Condition 1 of planning permission reference 2004/01930/FUL to extend time period for commencement of development.

Mr Nigel Jones – **Old Coal Yard, Gileston, St Athan** – Divert part of the overhead network and lay an underground cable, as per the Electricity Act, 1989.

Mr Leen Ritmeyer – **25 Minehead Avenue, Sully** – Extension to back of house for dining room.

Miss Thomas – **The Paddocks, Colwinston, Cowbridge** – Erect porch to rear of dwelling.

Mr Stephen Jones and Mrs Rebecca Evans – **12 Park Road, Penarth** – One replacement dwelling, including all external works and access from the highway.

Ms J Bertini – **8 Cae Canol, Penarth** – Removal of existing lean-to conservatory and construction of single storey lean-to extension.

Barry Island Property Company – **The Dolphin, Friars Road, Barry** – Demolition of the existing Dolphin bar/restaurant and redevelopment for 25 residential units, commercial uses and associated works.

Mr Peter Daniell – **81 South Road, Sully** – Demolition of existing garage and outbuildings. Re-roofing of existing rear extension connecting to new side extension.

Mr Anthony Oakley – **Glade View, St Mary Church** – Rear two storey and single storey extension.

PDSA – **PDSA, 6 Windsor Road, Penarth** – Replacement fascia, projecting signage and vinyl posters affixed to rear of shop front windows and doors.

Ms A Wills – **58 Porthkerry Road, Rhoose** – Creation of first floor area and ground floor extensions to existing bungalow.

Vale of Glamorgan Council – **Nightingale Cottage, Porthkerry Park, Barry** – Material Change of Use from C3 residential to B1 business use and public display area.

Asda Stores Ltd – **Barry Waterfront, Powell Duffyn Way, Barry** – Car park and building signage to a new Asda store.

Mr EJ Jones & Sons – **Crack Hill House, A48, Brocastle, Bridgend** – Single storey extension.

Mr Leighton Thomas – **Ortho Clinical Diagnostics, Unit 2, Felindre Meadows, Llanharan, Pencoed** – Extension to the current facility to accommodate additional business capacity.

Estate of Mrs R Norris – **Pentwyn House, Church Road, Llanblethian** – Removal of unilateral undertaking to allow for change (subject to planning) to two dwellings.

DJK Pizza Ltd – **Clerk to the Justices, Vale of Glamorgan Magistrates Court, Thompson Street, Barry** – New shopfront, fascia and projecting sign.

Mrs Dwyning – **38 Stanwell Road, Penarth** – Reduce chestnut tree and reduce plum tree.

Mr Wilshire – **39 Cardiff Road, Dinas Powys** – Fell thuya.

Mrs Stanton – **12 Blodyn Y Gog, Barry** – Two oak trees – reduce limbs growing towards house, thin by 15 per cent and reduce crown.

Ms Sabine McGuire – **Ty Mawr, Bonvilston** – Dismantle two elm trees to first fork, crown raise sycamore tree, dismantle four stems of holm oak (near house) and crown raise holm oak.

Mr Douglas Burton – **1 Manor View, Ham Manor Park, Llantwit Major** – Take down two scots pines and crown raise silver birch.

Ms Kate Russell – **Great House, Bridge Road, Llanblethian** – Remove cherry, pine, ash, large cypress and willow trees. Crown raise two cherry trees off the path. Crown raise and thin out a group of field maple trees. Crown raise willow trees. Formation prune a group of pine trees. Reduce two cypress trees back to old reduction points.

Wm Morrison Supermarkets plc – **Unit 2, Heol Ceiniog, Waterfront Retail park, Barry** – Ancillary pet care and treatment facility within an existing A1 retail unit.

Mr Nigel Rowland – **2 Regency Close, Llantwit Major** – Erection of front porch, double storey side extension, detached garage. Demolition of existing garage.

Ms Helen Andrews – **Plas Hen, Bonvilston** – Change of Use to return Plas Hen Bed and Breakfast back to residential use.

Filco Supermarkets Ltd – **Former Magistrates Court, Thompson Street, Barry** – Unit 3 to be occupied by Filco Supermarkets.

Mr Richard Stapleton – **144 Plassey Street, Penarth** – Proposed single storey rear/side extension.

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Barry and District Ladies Skittle League results

LATEST results are:

First division: Red Admiral (M See, S Hayes 26) 261, Allsorts (C Griffith 30) 262; Space Finders (E Worthy 37) 328, Coppers (J Hartwell 31) 355; Cigar Ladies (J Wood 33 290, SV Gals (V Pycroft 34) 327; Bakers Dozen (E Baker 28) 271, Barry Stars (C Lambeth 28) 236; Friends and Family (G Brown 27) 218, Castaways (K Bunter 24) 233; Family Affair (S Evans 32) 269, Pila Palas (A Williams, G Griffiths 26) 244; Colcot Ladies (J Parker, A Singleton 29) 273, Special Angels (L Pearce 29) 260.

Second division: Bobby's Girls (S Sugden 30) 257; Strikers (H Hicks, B Page 25) 242; Castle Bandits (B Evans 28) 253, Roller Coasters (S Jones, M Burgess, J Bresspry 25) 253; Cad Con Fillies (J Rogers 28) 239, Witchill Widows (D Fido 27) 220; Breakaways (V Martin, C Parfitt, N Smith, J Dawins 28) 288, Divas (W Drayse 29) 265; Rhoose Starlights (C Dally, M McAteer 25) 249, After Eights (I Havard, A Jackson 24) 227; Vixens (T Hatton, D Marks 27) 255, Clickies (M Thomas 28) 264.

Third division: SV Ladies (K Laeny 29) 299, Rhoose Ravers (J Bisop, C Bagnall, D Davison, J Lott 29) 282; Lil's Devils (S Evans 25) 238, Jolly Dollies (S Lewis, C Jones 23) 204; Etcetera (S Dyke, C Mackintosh, M Denley 26) 263, Airways Angels (A Sales 28) 204; Merry Makers (R Collins, C Edwards 22) 211, Westenders (B Goddard, L Weston 22) 222; Friends and Neighbours (M Phipps 25) 252, Hill Billies (S Moorcroft 30) 240; Persuaders (C Organ 27) 223, Dolly Mixtures (R Stuart 21) 197; Rugby Triers (V Cawley 28) 222, Witchill Wanderers (C Morrissey 23) 232.

Fourth division: Challengers (J Dimond 30), Odd Bods (C Koops, M Melbourne, T Perry 22) 226; Wyndham Witches (C Green 26) 226, Twilights (A Campbell, C Brown 26) 242; La Belles (R Clogg 34) 314, Rebels (J Farr 35) 331; Fallen Angels (S Jones 30 270, BFFs (M Pring 29) 275.

Fifth division: Nite Outers (M Hudson 24) 169, Barry Ravers (K Germon 28) 179; Park Belles (M Whitehurst 33) 218, Smurfs (J Maxwell 24) 142; Aristocats (T Weston 28) 240, Liberals (S Parry 31) 244; Socialites (K Glover 26) 253, Optimists (J Holland 26) 164; Guardian Angels (L Harris 27) 201; Hell Raisers (L Waters 28) 196.

Sports are defeated by Llandaff

SULLY Sports took on Llandaff North, losing by six points in a game that if they wanted, they could have easily won.

Sports were the stronger and more skilled team on the day, and took their chances well after the visitors took an early lead.

The lead then passed back and forth between Sports and Llandaff North, but yet again Sports showed how far they are willing to go to play good rugby, and some excellent interlinking between the forwards and backs, saw them break out from their own 22 metre line, showing enterprise and scoring well worked tries.

The score didn't reflect the game, Llandaff North taking the match 32-26.

Thanks to all the supporters who braved this cold day; Sully are back to the league action this weekend playing Cathays away.

GI

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Family Notices

The Family of
JANE OLDFIELD
would like to express their sincere thanks to all those whose many kind words, expressions of sympathy and overwhelming support have sustained and comforted them during their sad loss, and for their generous donations to The Prospect Hospice, Swindon.

PIPPIN
Vera Myfanwy
Passed away peacefully after a short illness, Vera aged 91 years of Llantwit Major and formerly of Cilfynydd and Tonteg. Mother of Philip and Yvonne, and a loving grandmother and greatgrandmother.
Funeral service in Coychurch Crematorium on Monday, 29 December at 2.45pm. Family flowers only but donations may be made to British Diabetic Association or Cancer Research UK Cymru c/o the Funeral Director (cheques only please).

WILLIAMS
Karl
28.6.74 – 29.7.00
Gone is the face we love so dear
Silent is the voice we love to hear
Too far away for sight and speech
But not too far for thoughts to reach
Who through absence is just as dear
Merry Christmas Karl
Love and kisses Mum, Dad, Annabel, Kris, Jamie, Gemma, Leighton, Leona, Curtis, Lacey, Kayden & Evie xxx
Also, remembering Mam and Dad Pycroft, Ron and Jack, Ernie & Babs, Joan & Marjorie, Gordon & Mary, Billy, David and Glad xxx

BOON
Valerie Ellen
Valerie, loving wife to the late Michael and devoted mother to Richard, Gareth and Martin, passed away suddenly on December 13, 2014.
In accordance with her wishes, a private service for close family members will be held in due course. The family would like to thank the community for their sympathy and support at this difficult time.

GRIFFITHS
Ken
(of Marcross)
Suddenly but peacefully at home with his family on 14th December 2014, Ken, much loved husband of June, loving dad of Ann and Kim. Father-in-law to Richard and Alan, devoted grandfather of Gareth, Matthew, Ceri and Bethan. Proud great granddad of Arthur and Henry. Will be sadly missed by all family and friends.
Funeral service at Coychurch Crematorium on Tuesday, 23rd December 2014 at 1.15pm. Family flowers only, donations in lieu to the Diabetic Clinic, Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend.

DENLEY
Peter Charles
Peacefully at his home in Barry, on December 14, after a short illness, Peter aged 67 years. Loving husband of Dilys, much loved dad of Anne Marie and Clare, father-in-law of Stuart, a devoted pops to Elizabeth and Jonathan and a dearly loved twin brother of Derek.
Greatly missed by all who knew him.
Resting at AG Adams & Son, Gladstone Road, Barry, until the service in Salem Baptist Chapel, Beryl Road, Barry on Monday, December 22 at 4pm, afterwards to the Cardiff & Glamorgan Crematorium. Immediate family flowers only please, donations, if wished, for Cancer Research Wales (for brain research) may be forwarded to the funeral home.

MORGAN
William David
Suddenly on December 10 at Llandough Hospital, Will of Llantwit Major and formerly of West Hall Farm, West Aberthaw, beloved husband of Daphne, dearly loved father of Julie and David and much loved grandfather and great grandfather.
Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons, Fonmon. Funeral Friday December 19, service and cremation 3.15pm at Coychurch Crematorium, Bridgend.
No flowers by request, donations in lieu, if desired, to Velindre Hospital c/o J James, 11 Fonmon Road, Rhoose, Vale of Glamorgan, CF62 3DZ.

THOMAS
Rita (née Hopkins)
Sian, Rod, Sam and Emily would like to thank everyone who attended the funeral and for the cards, messages of sympathy, flowers and donations for The Stroke Association.
Thank you to Reverend Huw Butler for the lovely service and W.A. Brown & Son Funeral Directors.
Everyone's kindness and support has been a great comfort to us at this sad time. *God bless you, Mum.*

PHELPS
David John
Peacefully on December 9th with his loving wife Diane at his bedside, David passed away.
He will be greatly missed by his family and many friends.
Resting at Vale Funeral Service, 181 Court Road, Barry until a celebration of his life at Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, Barry on Monday, 22nd December at 10.45am, followed by cremation at Cardiff & Glamorgan Crematorium, Barry. Immediate family flowers only please. Donations may be made at the service to The Critical Care Unit at UHW, Cardiff in memory of David.
Funeral arrangements entrusted to Lyndsay Ellis 01446 407962.

DAVIES
June (Nee Lacey)
Peacefully, after a short illness, June passed away on Thursday December 11 at Llandough Hospital. Loving mother to Wendy and Cara. June will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved her.
Resting at Park Independent Funeral Directors, 7 Tynewydd Road, Barry, until her funeral service on Tuesday, 23rd December, 12 noon at the Cardiff and Vale Crematorium, Port Road, Barry. Family flowers only please, donations may be made at the service in memory of June to Cancer Research.
The family invite everyone who wishes to attend to join them back at The Wyndham, Harbour Road, Barry.

Memories

JENNIFER MARY HISCOCK
1950 - 2006
Looking back with tenderness along the path you trod, I bless the years I spent with you and leave the rest to God, love your husband Phil xxx

PAULINE
(my sister)
1949 - 2012
God saw that you were tired.
He knew you needed rest.
His garden must be beautiful.
He only takes the best.
Love Phil xxx

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Howard & Marilyn Hellyar
wish family, friends & neighbours a very Merry Christmas xxx

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For more information, or to request an application form, please contact: Barry Town Council, 7 Gladstone Road, Barry CF62 8NA; telephone (01446) 704920 or e-mail **info@barrytowncouncil.gov.uk**

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cynnal a chadw tir, torri gwair, strimio, cynnal a chadw coed, borderi, rheoli chwyn, clirio draeniau, gwagio biniau sbwriel, delio ag ymholiadau gan aelodau'r cyhoedd a gwaith cynnal a chadw cyffredinol.

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Wedding Anniversary

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Mum & Dad on your Diamond Wedding Anniversary
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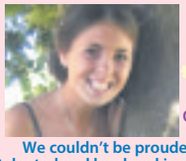
xxx

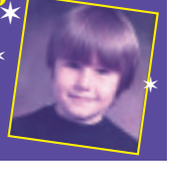
Birthday Notices

Bethan Thomas



16th December
Happy 18th Birthday
to our darling daughter Bethan
We couldn't be prouder of the gorgeous, talented and hardworking young lady you have become. Enjoy your day and celebrations.
Love always Mum, Dad, Dan, Cats and Albi xxxx

LOOK WHO'S 40
HAPPY 40TH BIRTHDAY
JONATHAN DAVIES
on 18th December



We hope you have a lovely day.
Love Bev, Dad, Rhys, Tomos, family and friends xxxx

Tricia Farley
of Rhoose
Thank you everyone for all your help and good wishes.
Sorry I am unable to send cards this year, but I would like to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.
Love Tricia

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PENARTH HOCKEY FIRST TEAM PICK UP EARLY CHRISTMAS PRESENT WITH MEDICS WIN!

PENARTH Hockey Club's First XI returned to winning ways in time for the festive break, taking advantage of Cardiff Medics to get an early taste of the Christmas spirit with a 6-1 win, while the Seconds were denied their own Davis Wood Hockey League victory in dramatic fashion away at Gwent, drawing 2-2.

Penarth's 1st XI welcomed their opponents to Barry Sports Centre knowing that they had already beaten the same opposition in their season-opening encounter.

Despite again being forced into selection changes, the home side started strongly, taking the game to their opponents from the opening push back as the weather gods provided ideal conditions for good hockey.

Penarth's pressure paid quick dividends too, with a patient build-up being completed by a clinical reverse stick strike from Chris Baker.

The lead was doubled within minutes as the Bears pushed forward, allowing defensive midfielder Tom Harran to claim a rare goal shortly before the mid-point of the half.

At the other end, goalkeeper Mark Harris – the victim of a barrage of goals in recent weeks – was left with little to do as the Medics failed to exert any pressure on the home defence, allowing the restructured back four more than enough time to clear their lines on the few occasions play broke beyond the midfield.

Buoyed by their dominance, Penarth effectively put the game to bed before the interval, with Phil Lane and Chris McCarthy doubling the tally without reply, leaving the Medics facing a four-goal deficit ahead of the second period.

The visitors, somewhat belatedly, altered their tactics after the break, pushing more men forward to put greater pressure on the home defence, but it was still Penarth that held the upper hand, able to both build through the midfield or hit their opponents on the break.

With Gareth Hurman and Tom Parkinson providing useful links through the midfield, further goals always looked likely, and Lane duly obliged with a brace to complete his hat-trick midway through the half.

Perhaps taking their foot off the gas in the final minutes, Penarth's bid for a clean sheet came unstuck as the Medics claimed a late consolation, but six goals and three points proved welcome early presents as the Vale side heads into the Christmas break sitting eighth in De Cymru & The Marches 1.

One week from travelling to foot-of-the-table Bridgend, Penarth's 2nd XI felt a sense of déjà vu as they headed to another away game against a Gwent 'B' side that had sunk to the bottom of the pile since the last round of fixtures.

An early start brought its own problems as the Rougemont School pitch remained in the grip of a heavy frost, delaying the pushback by 20 minutes.

When the game finally got underway, Penarth began by underlining their stronger league position, but were unable to make the breakthrough and paid the price when Gwent struck on the break, intercepting the ball in midfield before drilling the ball into the bottom left corner of the visitors' net.

Although Penarth quickly redressed the balance, snatching an equaliser before the break, it was clear that the desired passing game was still AWOL, although this was, in part, due to the still thawing pitch rather than the quality of the opposition.

The Vale side were more dominant in the second half and managed to create several chances either side of Gwent having a goal disallowed. Penarth's pressure eventually told as a second goal saw them take the lead with 15 minutes left on the clock, but the home side were not to be denied.

After a late period of pressure, a defensive error allowed a bobbling ball to reach an unmarked player, whose last-minute tap in salvaged a 2-2 draw.

Although the poor state of the pitch played its part in a predominately scrappy affair, Penarth had good reason to feel frustrated as a much-needed victory went begging as Gwent capitalised on two defensive howlers, leaving the Vale side seventh in the standings.

Although the 1st XI heads into hiatus for a few weeks, league action continues for the seconds, who go west to Neath for a mid-table clash where victory could see the sides swap places for Christmas.

Penarth Hockey Club always welcomes new, old and returning players, umpires, supporters, friends and helpers regardless of age and ability.

Training takes place on the artificial turf at Barry Sport Centre every Wednesday, with the juniors in action between 6-7pm and seniors between 7-8pm.

Further information can be obtained from secretary Dave Stevens *d_stevens81@hotmail.co.uk*). **CL**

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Bridge results

RESULTS for the Vale of Glamorgan bridge club for December 15:

1st Mike Best & Kevin Maddox 68.51%, 2nd Mary Lougher & Margaret Gough 58.44%, 3rd John Beard & Liam Sheridan 56.49%.

LE

Vale's sporting ambassadors

FIFTEEN pupils across the Vale were recently selected to be part of the Vale's Young Ambassador programme, which inspires young people to become role models and leaders through sport.

The initiative was launched in Barry Leisure Centre, when pupils were given social media training and worked on a project to be implemented in their schools.

The Barry darts league round-up

WITH the Poachers not playing in the last two weeks, the Billy Ghosts returned to the top of the table with a 16-5 win against the Caddy Cons Raiders and a 21-0 win over the Hell Raisers.

The Mariners 66 climb into second place with a 12-9 away lots to the Park Weasels and a 13-8 home win over the Runways.

The BFC Allsorts remain unbeaten after winning 12-9 at home to the Plastics.The Cwm Talwg had a 14-7 home win against the Wanderers, with Steve Moggeridge hitting a 180.

The league committee would like to wish all league teams and members a merry Christmas and look forward to resuming the season in the new year.

RL

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Barry seconds squeeze past the Saracens

BARRY 2nd XV travelled to Cardiff Saracens for their rearranged Mallet Cup tie, hoping to maintain the momentum gained from last weekend's victory over Rumney.

With players beginning to return from injuries and unavailability, coach Rhidian Scott and manager Ken Chow had the luxury of making limited changes to the side, with the backline looking especially settled.

It was, however, always going to be a tough task to play a first-team in Cardiff Saracens and the opening exchanges proved that was the case. Barry fell foul of the referee's whistle in the first quarter, but the home side failed to take advantage with their outside half missing both penalty attempts.

Barry looked dangerous with ball in hand, with Ethan Dicks and Joel Williams looking particularly threatening. Jamie Oaten and Lloyd Dutton were colossal in the lineout, but when the official's whistle went again, Barry found themselves down to 14 men.

The away side also found themselves five points down before halftime, when an opportunistic kick forward was not fielded by the green-and-whites, and the result was an unconverted try.

Scott resisted the urge to ring the changes at halftime and his faith in the 15 players on the field was justified when Barry dominated proceedings after the interval.

After good work in the tight by John Dimond, Lee Turnbull and Oaten, Dicks put his side on the scoreboard with a penalty kick following a Saracens transgression in the contact area.

The home side struggled to cope with Barry's attacking play in the next quarter, and it was no surprise when the away side took the lead. Williams switched the angle of attack, bringing Rhidian Mepham into the line who in turn fed Rhys Knapman to outpace all defenders and score out wide. Dicks was unable to add the extras.

Saracens huffed and puffed in the final quarter to look for a way back into the game, but found Barry's defence, led by captain Lee Jones, in unrelenting mood.

Instead it was the away side who looked more likely to add to their lead, with Thomas, Evans and ultimately Dicks threatening the Saracens line.

The home side had one last chance in the dying embers of the game but when the ball fell loose and was hacked into touch, the referee's whistle signalled the end of a pulsating game in which Barry came out on top.

Barry 2nd XV will face Caerau Ely in the next round at home, while they continue their league campaign away at St Josephs this weekend. The 3rd XV are also in league action at St Peters.

***TEAM**: Mepham; Knapman, Busuttil, Dicks, Poole; Williams, Dimond; Thomas, Turnbull, Lundy; Rolfe, Dutton; Oaten, Jones ©, J Evans.*

***Replacements**: Ring, McTavish, Morris, D Evans. Man of the match: Dicks.*

KC

The Big Green Annual out now

A circuit to run in the ladies' open race at the Llangeinor Hunt Steeplechases at Pyle. The winner was Lauberhorn, ridden by Anna Metekoh (second from left).

JOHN BEASLEY'S *Big Green Annual* is jam-packed full of pictures, reports and features of the past point-to-point season.

This stunning 192 colour page pictorial record will make an ideal Christmas present for hunt-racing enthusiasts everywhere.

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Brian Lee

SULLY BOWLERS' MIXED RESULTS

SULLY Indoor Bowls teams had mixed results during the past week with the Club Championship team suffering a heavy defeat on their visit to league leaders Blaenau Gwent but the Stadium senior team maintained their unbeaten record by beating favourites Caerphilly (Islwyn).

On Saturday, December 6, the Stadium team travelled to Abertillery to play Blaenau Gwent on their three rink green which meant that Sully had to send three rinks to play at 10am and three rinks to play at 2pm, which is far from ideal, but made little difference to the result.

On a green with a much quicker pace than the Sully players are used to and a Blaenau Gwent team which included a number of internationals and players on the fringe, Sully were up against it from the off.

Sully morning skips of Brian Griffiths, Brian Foscolo and Fred Phillips were immediately put under pressure by the opposing rinks and went behind early with Griffiths' rink struggling against the Blaenau Gwent rink skipped by Welsh international Steve Harris.

The rinks of Foscolo and Phillips put up brave performances and both were leading into the final quarter but were outplayed over the final few ends leaving the home team ahead by 31 shots after the morning session.

The afternoon rinks of Matthew Woodcock, Martin Clarke and Ken McLeod tried to raise their games to not only overcome the deficit from the morning but also attempt to gain some points from winning on their rinks.

But the home side were in know mood to let Sully get into the game and all Sully rinks went down heavily suffering a 52 shot reverse plus the 31 shots from the morning gave Blaenau Gwent an 83 shot victory, 169-86 - a total whitewash, giving them 22 points.

Sully senior team played their fifth Championship game at home on Friday against their strongest opponents to date needing a win to qualify for the national play-offs.

The game began with the opposition taking a nine shot lead after nine ends with Griffiths's rink 10-0 behind but at the end of the 10th he had recovered to go 12-11 up.

The other rinks skipped by Dave Snelling, Fred Phillips and Ken McLeod were at this stage all having close games but Sully were still behind by eight shots. The game from the 10th end began to swing in Sully's favour; although Phillips and Griffiths were two and five behind respectively, the rinks of Snelling and McLeod at the 15th end were ahead by six and seven shots leaving Sully now ahead by six shots.

During the final six ends the rinks of McLeod, Griffiths and Phillips held their opponents while Dave Snelling's rink of Graham Cogbill, Alun Bryan and Mel Newman drew right away winning by 15 shots allowing, Sully a 12 shot victory, 84-72.

Sully took 10 points to Blaenau Gwent's four leaving Sully still unbeaten and in pole position to qualify for the national play-offs.

There is a three-week break over the Christmas period before the next round of games. The stadium will be open over the Christmas holidays, except for Christmas day and New Years day; opening times are 10am to 3pm.

Congratulations to Sully's Martin Clarke on making the final Welsh bowls trial, and we would like to wish all bowlers a merry Christmas and a happy New Year. **FP**

Lifeguards host Vale speed relays

ON Sunday, December 7, Rhoose Lifeguards hosted an afternoon of team relay races based on surf lifesaving events at Barry Leisure Centre.

The competition, entitled 'Vale of Glamorgan Speed Relays', saw junior, senior and masters teams from Sker, Llantwit Major, Pen-y-Bont, Southerndown and Rhoose, take part in races – including obstacle, manikin carry, rope throw, fin and medley events.

With each competitor in a team racing a pool length or 25 metres in events, the emphasis was on quick and 'speedy' races, which kept the momentum and energy going throughout the afternoon.

Rhoose Lifeguards would like to thank all of the teams for taking part and for all of the volunteers who helped with timekeeping and organisational duties.

Dinas ladies' golf

ON December 2, Turkey Trot Six Stableford – First, Annie Blackburn 17pts; second, Audrey Harwood 16pts on back six from third Sue Bridle 16pts on back three from Pam Warne 16pts.

On December 4, we held a successful nine hole Mulled Wine: First, Maxine Hird, Sian Smith and Pat Gosling 38pts; on back six from second, Angela Brown, Audrey Harwood and Terry Unwin 38pts; third Lisa Ryley, Ruth Yates and Annie Blackburn 34pts.

On December 9, we held a Texas Scramble: First, Angela Brown, Pat Gosling and Sally Livsey Davies, 42-7.25 = 34.75; second, Louise Wilding, Ruth Yates and Jackie Lewis 41 - 5.83 = 35.17; third, Maxine Hird, Audrey Harwood and June Jones, 42- 6.75 =35.25.

After golf, we gathered for a lovely brunch and presentation of Turkey Trot prizes. **RY**

TEAM WALES ARE WRESTLING WITH SUCCESS!

THE Welsh wrestling team built on their success in winning a bronze medal at the Commonwealth games with an outstanding performance and result at the recent Maltese Open.

A young Welsh team consisting of nine wrestlers and two officials led by head coach Alan Jones took part in this important annual international event alongside the hosts and teams from Northern Ireland, Switzerland and Italy.

This event was the last in a busy calendar year dominated by the Commonwealth games. The bronze won in that tournament has given the whole team a boost and to finish the year in style with victory in Malta for the first time is reward for the hard work of the whole team.

Each team member performed excellently with many terrific, hard fought bouts especially from the Cadets (16-17) who competed in a combined category with the older juniors (18-20). This made things harder for Team Wales but despite this disadvantage Iwan Baker (Rhoose) and Reece Price, both earning their first caps, produced great results and Bobby Singh won the gold in this category.

Further medals followed with Tom Nelson taking bronze in his first senior international in the 65kg division, Kane Charig took a silver in the same category losing by an agonising one point in the final to a top Maltese wrestler before Tommy Hawthorn started the gold rush in the 74kg category.

Wales' only female wrestler competing, Molly McCann, moved Team Wales up the leader board with a gold in her category before a nailbiting finale.

Welsh hopes were pinned on Salman Myalslav, who was pitted against Abraham Vassilo, victor in the previous three Maltese Opens, in the final of the 86kg category. After a cagey first round, Salman turned on the style to pin his opponent, win a fourth gold for Wales, and seal the overall team trophy for Team Wales.

The hard work is beginning to pay off and this victory with a young, inexperienced team on the back of the Commonwealth success provides great confidence for Welsh Wrestling in the future.

AJ

Disaster strikes Barry Chess Club

ALL four Barry Chess Club teams were recently in action in the East Glamorgan League.

We played two home games while the other two teams both travelled to Cardiff. Unfortunately, we lost two narrow games and were annihilated in the other two so we lost all four matches.

Out of 20 boards featuring 15 different Barry Chess Club members, we could muster only five points, which is our worst weekly return for many many years.

The Bosons hosted the North Cardiff Woodpushers in a division 1 clash, while at the opposite end of the hall the Gambits took on the Caerphilly Rooks in division 4.

The Bosons' side was allegedly strengthened by the return of Oxford student Rhys Steele. This was unfortunately his first match for almost three months and his ring rusty performance proved the decisive factor in this game.

The Woodpushers are a strong outfit on the top boards but have two 1m700 players at the bottom. For this match there was a late replacement as Ben Choo Yin was ill and he was replaced by Liam Penny, with an estimated rating of 1,500.

We did successfully win, with Steve Cunliffe on board 4 and Ashley Davis on board 5, to record a narrow loss by 3-2.

On the same night, the Gambits found themselves playing their lowest rated team of the season to date. The normal boards 3 and 4 were elevated to the top two boards.

The Rooks have normally selected from only six players. However, on this occasion Mike Joslin was unavailable, so they brought in a ringer, Bob Hurn on board 2.

This meant that this was by far the strongest team the Rooks had put out this season. The rating difference was so great that the cumulative ratings for the Rooks top three boards almost matched the cumulative ratings for our entire team.

It was no surprise when board after board was won by the Caerphilly side. The night was pierced by an agonising cry as Dwain Jones's flag fell and he thought he had lost.

It was pointed out to him that as his opponent, Jason Grice, only had his king on the board and therefore did not have mating material, the result was actualy a draw. Jason's half point was all we could muster.

The next day, there was a table topping clash between league leaders Barry Camelots and third placed Cardiff Castles. With Matthew Parry being unavailable, Chris Green was promoted to lay his first ever division 1 game for Barry.

The Castles side was so strong that Alan Spice was on board 4 giving them a team with four players rated over 2,000 and their board 5 was rated over 1,900. The quality of this team was too great for us and only Craig Woolcock saved our blushes with a draw on board 2.

This meagre return was enough to blow the Camelots off the top of the division for the first time in two months.

The Castles now have a narrow lead, with the Woodpushers not far behind. The Bosons bring up fourth place but are some way behind the top three with a game in hand.

The Barry Quarks, perhaps the surprise team in division 4, had a weakened team in Cardiff to play the Dragons.

With a couple of players unavailable and a couple playing for the Camelots, we expected to struggle. Steve Bonutto and myself made first starts in division 3 this season and both felt pleased to record draws. With a defeat on board 3 the match hung in the balance.

On board 1, Kevin Gandy was in a bit a of trouble, but managed to get his queen into a strong position. He was playing for a draw by perpetual check until his opponent found the only square for his king to allow Kevin to mate him and earn our only win on the night.

John Stephenson played on in a difficult position, hoping for a draw on time or a stalemate. He failed in his objective and was mated, with his opponent having only 31 seconds left on his clock.

The Barry Chess Club meets at 7.30pm each Monday at the West End Club, St Nicholas Road, Barry CF62 6QY.

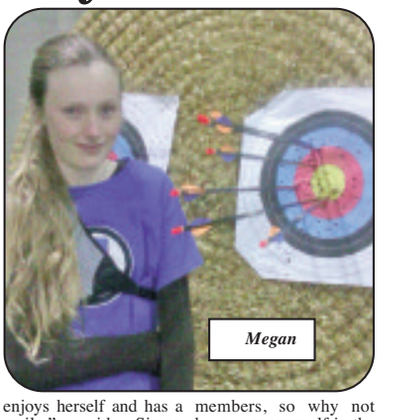
The club is open to players of all standards; whether you are interested in playing competitive chess, or just the occasional friendly game.

For more details, visit our website at http://barrychessclub.yolasite.com.

PHIL JONES, Club Secretary

News from Caerau Dragons Bowmen Archery Club...

CLUB members were proud to present one of their junior members with an achievement award after just one year as an archer.



Megan

Megan joined Caerau Dragons Bowmen Archery Club with her dad Rhys last November and after completing a beginners course of six lessons, she then progressed to practising indoors twice a week with the club.

As the evenings became lighter during the summer, outdoor shooting started at the club allowing targets to be placed at greater distances of 30 and 40 metres and Megan was able to practise and refine her skills with a greater challenge.

Constantly encouraged by other members of the club and supported by her family, Megan has achieved First Class and Bowman classifications at club level.

"This is a terrific achievement for Megan who has shown commitment and dedication to the sport over the last year, occasionally shooting in unfavourable weather conditions. She always enjoys herself and has a smile," said Simon Miskin, club chairman, who presented Megan with her Bowman classification badge.

The club is always looking for new members, so why not have a go yourself in the new year with a set of beginners lessons. Contact either Simon on 07974786235 or head coach Andrew Ellis on 02920 598062. **SM**

Bowling club's social evening

BARRY Central Bowls Club held a social evening recently at the Glenbrook Inn.

This was a most enjoyable dinner attended by the club president and his wife, the chairman, members of the committee and a number of bowlers, together with guests.

This has been a year of mixed fortunes for the club, who have very sadly witnessed the demise of some members, although attracting some new members to both the ladies and men's section of the club.

The last social event of this year will be one of the club's coffee mornings at 10.30am on Saturday, December 20. This will be a fundraising event, together with a presentation on behalf of the British Legion.

The members are looking forward to the 2015 bowling season, with the club issuing an invitation to new, as well as experienced bowlers, to join us at Gladstone Park on April 18, the start of the club's open week at the commencement of the new season.

JW

Barrivale results

RESULTS from Barrivale Bridge Club for December 9 were as follows:

First, Alan Jones and Lyn Matthews, 62.50 per cent; second, Helen Jordan and Judith Owen 60.32 per cent; third, Irene Thomas and Jenny Vaughan 53.97 per cent. Helen Jordan and Judith Owen won on handicap.

New members are always welcome at Barrivale. A partner may be arranged if required. If you would like to join, telephone 01446 418380, or 01446 733425; or call at the Pioneer Hall, Beryl Road, Barry on Tuesdays at 7pm.

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Cadoxton students land impressive medal haul

WORLD Organisation of Martial Art Athletes (WOMAA) British Grand Prix finals were held in the Barry Memorial Hall, hosted by master Mal Johns.

Having competed over the last 12 months in various ranking tournaments a number of students from the Cadoxton School of Tae Kwon Do were in the mix for Grand Champions.

The grand prix series consisted of beginner less then one years training, advanced over one years training in all categories, traditional patterns, weapons point and continuous sparring. With points being awarded for every podium place and totalled up after the last tournament resulting in a series grand champion.

As usual the tournament started with traditional Patterns, then onto Weapons, Point & Continuous sparring, beginners, and advanced categories.

After a long day competing five students from the Cadoxton Taekwon-Do school came away with 10 British W.O.M.A.A. Grand Championship titles between them.

Grand Champions In their various categories are: Maddison Allen, Continuous Sparring Grand Champion; Thea Cunningham, Continuous Sparring Grand Champion; Jessie Blackley, Point and Continuous Sparring Grand Champion;

Cody Jacobsen, Weapons and Continuous Sparring Grand Champion; Lucia Cunningham, Patterns, Weapons, Point and Continues Sparring Grand Champion.

For further information on class times, phone (01446) 406372 or see www.cadoxtontaekwondo.weebly.com.

Pictured (above) with the instructor are: Lucia Cunningham, Cody Jacobsen, Jessie Blackley, Ron Thomas (coach) Maddison Allen, Thea Cunningham. **RT**

Little book of horse racing...

ON AND OFF THE TURF with Brian Lee

DO you know what the oldest horse race in Britain is, where the term 'gee gee' comes from, or who is credited with bringing racing to Ascot?

The Little Book of Horse Racing by former point-to-point rider Anne Holland (published by The History Press at £9.99) is a compendium of the fascinating, strange and entertaining facts that can be dipped into time and time again to reveal something new about the ancient sport of horseracing.

There are chapters on betting, racecourses, racing terminology, influential stallions, jockeys down the centuries, and so much more. On comparing two great jockeys, Fred Archer and Sir Gordon Richards 50 years apart, we learn that in Archer's time he had to rely on trains and horse drawn vehicles for transport, but Gordon not only had a chaffeur-driven car he could also travel by air.

Fred rode in the upright stance of the time, but by Gordon's time, the forward crouch position had long been adopted. Gordon is reported as saying: "Fred Archer's performance easily outstripped mine and let nobody doubt that. I make this statement with absolute sincerity and certainty. His was an extraordinary, a unique performance... his achievement in 1885 of riding 246 winners in a season, taking into consideration the difficulties with which he had to contend, is the greatest feat a jockey will ever achieve... Fred Archer is one of the really great men of the turf."

Kind words indeed from Gordon, who many believe to have been the greatest flat racing jockey in the world.

If your husband, wife or partner is into horse racing, then this cracking little book would make a great Christmas stocking filler.

Champagne Chaser

***CHAMPAGNE CHASER*, trained by Tim Vaughan at Aberthin, was a 10 lengths winner of the bumper (National Hunt flat race) at Uttoxeter last week.**

Confidently ridden by Richard Johnson, Champagne Chaser was fancied and was returned the 9-4 favourite.

For sale

TIM VAUGHAN has several horses for sale and these include *Panis Angelicus,* a five-year-old son of *Panis* who he describes as "a tough, consistent individual who won on his most recent outing, over two miles on the flat at Chantilly at the end of October. The third home, who was beaten less than two lengths, won well in a listed race at Saint-Cloud on his next start."

Also up for sale is *Tobacco Road,* a son of the exciting young National Hunt sire *Westerner*. Tim said: "He has shown a very high level of form on the flat over the past two seasons, winning twice at Sandown and Windsor and running to a very high Racing Post rating of 94 when finishing runner-up over the extended one mile and three furlongs back at Windsor last time out."

If you want advice on buying a racehorse, Tim's telephone number is 01446 771626.

Meanwhile, one of Tim's to look out for in the next week or two is the ex-Irish recruit *Dubh Eile*. Tim said: "*Dubh Eile* has done very well physically since being purchased at the Tattersals August sale and has been showing up well on the gallops at home."

It's a Steal!

It's A Steal, trained by Evan Williams at Llancarfan, ran out an easy 10 lengths winner of the 32Red.Com Handicap Chase at Warwick last week.

The promising seven-year-old was ridden by stable jockey Paul Moloney and went off the 9-4 favourite. The day's riding honours however went to J E Moore who rode three winners-Top Gamble, Kylemore Lough and Incentivise- for Welsh border trainer Richard Lee.

The last named was once owned by the late Cardiff saddler John Ayres.

King Rolfe romps home

King Rolfe, trained by Tim Vaughan at Aberthin, romped home a 13 lengths winner of the opening John Marsden 80th Birthday Handicap Chase at Southwell on Sunday where Vaughan is the leading trainer.

King Rolf, a 9-1 chance, and at six the youngest horse in the race, was ridden by leading jockey Richard Johnson.

You can e-mail your news and views to brianlee4@virginmedia.com or call him on 02920736438.

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Tristan Greedy would like to inform all of his customers that due to business expansion they have moved from the Heritage Business Park, Wick Rd, Llantwit Major to their new premises (next door to the Post Office sorting office), Llandow, Vale Business Park - and it's business as normal.

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Year 7 netballers.

Cowbridge Comprehensive sports round-up

The year 7 hockey team who took on Plasmawr.

THE Year 7 B netball team took part in the B County Cardiff & Vale netball tournament.

There were four pools with 5/6 teams in each. Cowbridge played Mary Immaculate first and won 4-1. In the second game against Fitzalan Cowbridge won 2-1. Glantaf were next and unfortunately Cowbridge lost 5-1. The fourth game was against St. Cyres where Cowbridge were back to their winning ways beating them 2-1.

In the last match against Cathedral Cowbridge won 6-0 taking them through to the second round where they faced Glantaf second team in the quarter finals.

In a close game Cowbridge won 5-4 going through to the semi-final. In the semi Cowbridge faced Bro Edern who beat us 9-0.

Cowbridge played Stanwell in the 3rd/4th play-off and in a very close game Stanwell just edged in front at the end with Cowbridge losing 2-3 to come fourth in the tournament of 21 teams.

Team: GS Mai Williams, GA Sian Lloyd, WA Hannah Dixon, C Isabel Annetts, WD Catrin Roy, GD Kate Floyd, GK Seren Rees. Substitutes were Emily Hodgkin and Jess Burt - very well done to all the players.

HOCKEY

The Year 7 hockey teams played Plasmawr in their third match this year.

They won both matches and it was obvious that their hockey skills are really improving.

The 'A' team won 3-1 with lovely stick work from Amelie Clode and Alexa Browning. In defence Tilly Gough cleared the ball several times finding Isabel Annetts and Hannah Dixson.

The 'B' team also won convincingly 7-1; excellent play from Catrin Roy, Jess Burt and Sian Lloyd and good defence from Katy Wright - well done ladies.

Players of the match: Amelie Clode and Catrin Roy.

FOOTBALL

Cowbridge welcomed St. Cyres to the hallowed 3G turf on a cold December afternoon in order to determine who would progress in the highly competitive CVSFA trophy.

A biting wind accompanied the players onto the pitch and it soon became apparent that the sudden stronger gusts would affect the match.

Coach Mr Lewis passed instructions on to play the ball on the deck as much as possible in order to negate the breezy conditions.

The starting 11 differed to that which emerged victorious from the first round at St. Richard Gwyn. The defence was now marshalled by centre halves Kiall Payne and Jac Roberts, both boys producing physical and committed displays.

They were ably accompanied by Ioan Lewis and James Guard. Goalkeeper Ellis C-L was again athletic and acrobatic between the sticks. Although blessed with a pacy attack St. Cyres were limited to the long ball and one striker whom did possess a threat.

However Cowbridge started brightly and deservedly took the lead from a smart move down the left flank and great finish from Ieaun Llewellyn. Unfortunately St. Cyres equalised almost immediately and the end to end nature of the game continued unabated.

After a goalmouth scramble Bevan Howells pounced and Cowbridge went into the break a goal to the good.

Both sides started the second half well, Lathan Garrett and Sean Carpenter both thoroughly involved as they had been in the first half and pushing Cowbridge forward, as was Mo Gee.

Against the run of play St. Cyres pinched an equaliser and on came Laurence Bowman and Harry Price. Dan Williams remained in centre midfield where his performance and ability to disrupt St. Cyres' attacks was proving influential.

In the dying few minutes both sides had numerous chances to scramble a winner but to no avail. Both coaches congratulated both sides and the referee on an excellent game of football. The captains then provided their five penalty takers to the referee and the excitement of the shootout began.

Cowbridge were so composed that all penalties required were duly dispatched and keeper Ellis pulled off a couple of great stops too as Cowbridge won 4-2! Cue, celebrations and passage into the next round – let's see who is up next and hope for a home tie!

Mr. Lewis would like to say a huge well done to all and a huge thanks to Jack Richards, Peter Teague and Jake Griffiths who made up the remainder of the bench but didn't quite get the chance to come on. Thank you boys.

UNDER-14s END YEAR WITH CLOSE DEFEAT

LAST Sunday, Cowbridge under-14s travelled to Newport High School Old Boys for the first meeting of these two teams.

Given the incredible weather during the week, we were all surprised but delighted the game could go ahead.

Cowbridge started the strongest with some excellent running by Dan O'Sullivan, the powerful straight running Cowbridge inside centre. O'Sullivan took a number of crash balls from Price-Thomas, his outside half, during the first few minutes, making some excellent metres.

The Newport HSOB defence stood strong and produced many brave tackles to bring down O'Sullivan. As the Cowbridge team gathered momentum they entered Newport's 22, this time using phases of short pop passes to enable the forwards to make the metres needed.

Cowbridge were literally moving forward inch by inch towards the Newport line, but time and time again Newport's defence held strong.

Unfortunately the referee awarded Newport a penalty metres from their own line, which allowed their very good kicking outside half to clear their lines.

From the resulting line out, Newport won the ball through their six foot four, 13-year-old second row!

Their outside half played the conditions well and put Cowbridge on the back foot with some excellent tactical kicking, keeping the Cowbridge backs turning to gather the bouncing slippery ball.

Against the run of play, the game's opening try came from one of these long Newport kicks deep into Cowbridge's 22. Cowbridge were penalised for falling on the ball and not releasing straight away. From the penalty, Newport ran the ball and cleverly used their large pack as a dummy attracting all the Cowbridge defenders.

A couple of simple passes along the back line allowed the Newport left winger to cross the line unopposed. Cowbridge came straight back at Newport and once again were camped in the Newport's 22, but once again the Newport defence held strong.

Cowbridge changed their tactics and tried to use their backs and started passing the ball across the back line. Given the conditions this was a brave call but the team executed some difficult handling very well.

However, with minutes to go, the Newport outside centre intercepted a Cowbridge backs move to run half the length of the field to score a break away try under the posts. Halftime and the score was Newport HSOB 12, Cowbridge 0.

Throughout the second half Cowbridge continued to play all the rugby with the majority of the ball, but Newport continued to defend incredibly well. The Cowbridge forwards were producing their best performance of the season, winning ball after ball against a much bigger Newport pack.

With the conditions deteriorating and the ball behaving more like a bar of soap, Cowbridge still managed to put a number of excellent phases of rugby together. The Newport defence began to get tired and after a number of penalties Cowbridge finally managed to cross the line. Ioan Williams took a quick tap penalty and put Jack Little, the strong Cowbridge prop, into space.

Little burst through a couple of tackles to score just to the right of the posts; I.Williams converted.

With the game entering its final stages Cowbridge threw everything they had at the Newport defence, but Newport held out for the win.

Given the conditions this was an excellent game of under-14s rugby. The boys were disappointed at the end of the game; however they played excellent rugby and on another day would have turned out winners.

GJ

Youth win in the league

ON Saturday, Cowbridge's youth BC team travelled to Llanishen for a league match and secured another fine win, triumphing 21-12.

Tries came from No 8 Dan Holder, scrum half Adam Dix and wing Harry Driscoll with three conversions from the boot of Alex Guard.

This Saturday the BC team travel to Caerphilly for a Cup match while the BD team are at home for a Plate match against Fleur de Lys.

The first XV's final match for 2014 against Llantwit Major has now been confirmed for this Saturday at home. This should be a great occasion to finish off the year and a big crowd is guaranteed so come along and support the boys.

The first game of 2015 is away to St Albans on January 3 followed by a home game against Taffs Well on January 10.

Finally, a merry Christmas and best wishes for 2015 to all those who have supported the club in many ways in 2014.

RV/RK

Cowbridge darts league

On Tuesday, December 9, the Llanharry Working Men's Club remain unbeaten, defeating the Highwayman Inn 9-0.

This allowed the Edmondes B, by winning 5-4 against the Edmondes A to take over second place. The Edmondes C won 7-2 against the Old Post Ladies. At the Hare and Hounds the Farmers Arms eventually came out on top with the last throw of the game winning 5-4. In this match both Nigel Thomas (Farmers Arms) and Simon Reader (Hare and Hounds) hit a 180.

Present league standings after ten matches, are: Llanharry (73 points), Edmondes B (55), Highwayman Inn (48), Edmondes A (46), Hare and Hounds (39), Edmondes C (38), Farmer's Arms (37) and Old Post Ladies (22).

There is now a break for the Christmas and New Year holiday and matches will recommence on Tuesday, January 6, with a full schedule of league matches.

The Edmondes A hosts the Farmers Arms, the Old Post Ladies hosts the Hare and Hounds, the Highwayman Inn hosts the Edmondes B and the Edmondes C hosts Llanharry.

All matches start at 8.15pm and spectators are welcome. Note all teams can register new players until the New Year so if you wish to play darts this season get in touch soon.

For further information e-mail Paul at cowbridgedarts@gmail.com, up-to-date information can be found on the website: www.darts.apsn.co.uk.

PJT

Round-robin fun!

AFTER having an extra last minute fixture handed to them, Llantwit under-7s finished 2014 by hosting Pencoed and Llanharan in a round robin at the Comprehensive school.

Once again the team found themselves without a number of regulars and unfortunately, due to illness, Oliver Ingram also had to withdraw before kick off.

Llantwit started the morning against a strong Llanharan side but refused to buckle and the game turned into probably the best game of the season so far.

At every opportunity Llantwit threw players forward in attack then worked hard to stop Llanharan from crossing the whitewash. In the end the game finished with honours shared at seven tries a piece; tries came from Aaron Moce, Theo Elsenburg, Thomas Collins (2), Dylan Godsell and Jos Bourner.

Llantwit took a well deserved rest while Pencoed and Llanharan battled it out before playing their final match of the day against Pencoed.

It was another close encounter but the team fell at the final hurdle, losing by 5 tries to 3. Tries came from Kyle Pagano (2) and Thomas Collins.

The team have shown great progress since the start of the season and hopefully the Christmas break will not affect them too much. This weekend the team have a well deserved Christmas treat.

Team - Aaron Moce, Sam Whitbread, Thomas Collins, Theo Elsenburg, Ifan Lovejoy, Dylan Godsell, Lloyd Morgan, Kyle Pagano, Jos Bourner and Norah Griffiths.

IG